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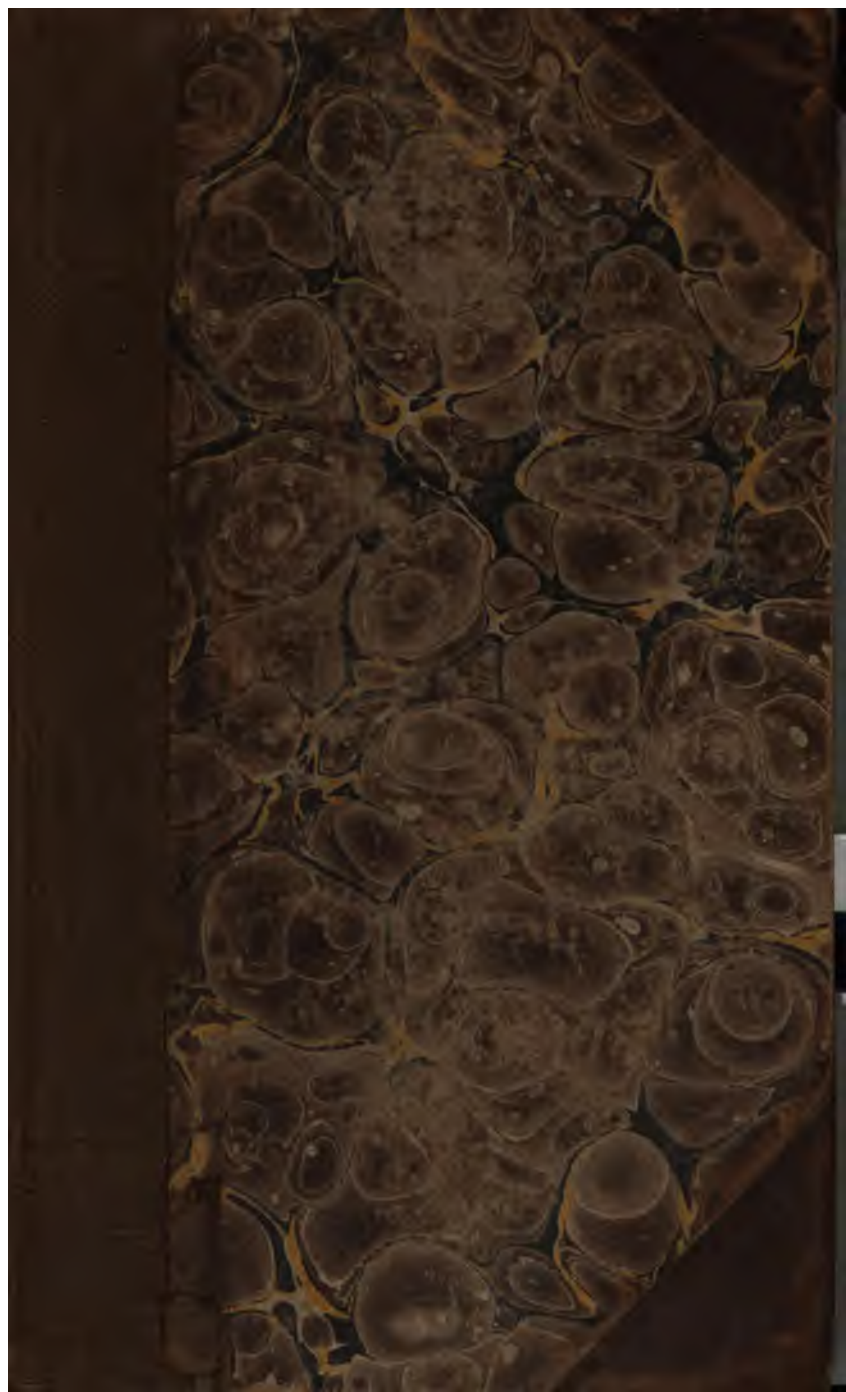
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IZRAH,

14. 1826

A MEXICAN TALE;

AND OTHER POEMS.

BY

CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH,

AUTHOR OF OSRIC, &c.



DEDICATED, BY PERMISSION, TO
HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF BRAUFORT.

**PUBLISHED BY JAMES NISBET,
21, BERNERS STREET, LONDON.**

M.DCCC.XXVI.

241.

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TO
HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF BEAUFORT,
WHOSE HIGH RANK AND EXALTED STATION
TEND MORE CONSPICUOUSLY TO DISPLAY
THOSE ENDOWMENTS OF CHRISTIAN HUMILITY,
AND
THAT ABUNDANT FRUIT OF GOOD WORKS,
WHICH,
SPRINGING FROM FAITH,
BY THEIR EXAMPLE WIN TO OBEDIENCE,
THIS VOLUME
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,
BY HER GRACE'S
VERY GRATEFUL HUMBLE SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

The circumstances of the following Story may be supposed to have occurred a considerable time previous to the great struggle for independence in South America.

ERRATUM.

Page 190, line 13, for 'river' read 'riven'

IZRAM.

CANTO I.

“YE verdant shades, that gently bow
Your welcome o'er this throbbing brow,
And soft beneath my burning tread
In flowery moss a carpet spread,
Joyous I hail sweet nature's throne,
Untainted by the breath of men ;
These echoes know no mortal tone,
No step unhallowed prints the glen ;
All silent, save the feathery throat,
Warbling its wild untutored note,
The rustling leaf, and fluttering wing,
And murmurs of this cooling spring,

Whose silver tides their freshness roll,
Like mercy to a parching soul."

So spake the pilgrim youth, who strayed
To where those limpid waters played ;
Laid his light musquet on the bank,
Bowed with uncovered head, and drank.

Ere from the stream his lip can part,

A savage growl, resounding nigh,
Thrills through the traveller's beating heart ;

Starting he views the blood-shot eye :

The jaguar in his wrath is there,

The red ball rolls its fiery glare,

But threats not him :—beneath the shade

The victim in repose is laid ;

Native his garb,—while zephyr sighed

O'er his young cheek, and fanned his rest,

Waving the ringlet's glossy pride,

And sporting with the lightsome vest,

Death from his ambush marked the prey ;

A moment—and he wakes no more :

The murderer bares, in dread array,

Those grinding fangs to quaff his gore ;

Type of the lurking foes, who scan

The heedless hour of dreaming man !

But help is nigh—with purpose true,

Swift to its aim, a death-shot flew ;

The howling monster ploughs the wood,

And tracks it with a stream of blood.

Upstarts the sleeper, lightnings flash

Beneath the long and sable lash :

“ Iberian blood-hound ! darest thou creep,

Thou soul of crime, on sacred sleep ?”

The glittering dirk is brandished high,

But all unmoved the pilgrim stands :

“ No blood-hound, no Iberian I,—

My breath was drawn from fairer lands,

Where treachery lurks not : lo, the deed
That succoured thee at utmost need,
Yet moves thine ire." The fact was plain,
The branches rent, the crimson stain,
Dying the spot where couched the foe,
And roots uptorn, their comment shew.

A rapid glance that scene surveys,
Then meets the traveller's stedfast gaze.
" Too scant the grace to bid thee live,
Stranger, I did thee wrong—forgive :
Well hast thou 'scaped my knife ; the need
Is to thy birth, and not thy deed.
I ween this bold exploit was shewn
Less for my safety than thine own.
Yet what thy nation ? quickly tell ;
This alien tongue of pompous Spain,
Detested accent ! suits thee well ;
Beware thou dally not—'twere vain."

"Thy speech is rude; I answer not
 From cold compulsive fear; I know
 The galling chain, the bitter lot,
 That bids thy country writhe in woe:
 Britons can bend in pitying love,
 Where threats nor daunt, nor perils move."

"And art thou of that island race?
 Methinks their lineaments I trace;
 Thy bearing lacks the fiendish pride
 Of arrogance with craft allied:
 I like thee well—thou shalt with me;—
 Yet ere we wend in peace along,
 Endure one test in courtesy,
 —Suspicion is the child of wrong—
 Somewhat of English speech I know."

The youth complies with willing smile,
 Freely the dear-loved accents flow
 That echo through his sea-girt isle.

“ Then thus I sheath my trusty blade,
And plight a hand that ne’er betrayed,
Though rightful meed, with biting steel,
It erst hath dealt, and yet shall deal.
Izram, whose soul the dart hath torn,
Yet hurls it back with double scorn ;
Izram the wronged, who ever yet
With full arrear hath paid the debt
Of human hate, nor shrinking swerved
From vengeful deed—by thee preserved,
In grateful guerdon shall not fail,
If hand or counsel aught avail.”

“ I take thy proffer, freely made ;
Conduct me to thy dwelling’s shade ;
Fain would I rest till morning’s ray,
For I have trod a toilsome way :
Entangled here, thy better skill
May guide me to the distant hill,

The eastern mount, whose borders sweep
Even to the rude and briny deep."

The Briton meets with placid heed
The piercing glance that fain would read
His inmost thought. "The choice is new
To wind this dreary forest through,
When broad, beyond its utmost bound,
Lies many a league of beaten ground.
What lured thee from th' accustomed road,
To pierce the serpent's dark abode?
Methinks it were for reason good,
If man prefer this wildering wood."

"I marvel not such pathway sought
Should waken a mistrustful thought;
But while at ease our frames are laid
Beneath this aloe's beauteous shade,
Hear thou my story, sad and brief:—

Thou know'st the creed of erring Spain,
Whose votaries clasp in blind belief
The dreams of a distempered brain,
And deem the corn that crowns the sod
Transmuted to the living God.

“ In our fair isle the Lord hath given,
Unerring guide! the light from heaven;
It gleams from forth the written page,
On clown and noble, youth and age:
Taught by the rule of truth, we turn
From fabling tales, the idol spurn,
And, holding fast th' eternal word,
Confess no Saviour but the Lord.

“ Twin brothers, linked in two-fold band,
Peaceful we sought this fatal strand,
Nor dreamt such murderous hate could shame
The beauty of the Christian name.

Soon were we marked, through every scene

Our steps were traced, the watch was set,

But still in act and purpose clean,

We trampled on the viewless net.

“ At length, on some high festal day,

Heedless we urged our wonted way :

The host was there, the blinded crowd

Before their senseless idol bowed,

And bent the knee, and drooped the head,

In homage to a god of bread.

Erect amid the prostrate throng,

We bore us, as it passed along ;

With deafening shouts the clamour rose,

And fiercely pressed our bigot foes ;

We could not kneel ; the Lord hath spoke,

And cursed is each idol yoke.

“ One, deep in crime as high in place,

Blot of his office and his race,

With frantic rage his poniard drew,
And aimed it with a thrust so true,
That ere I heaved a second breath,
My brother's eyes were dark in death."

"Remorseless fiend! accursed blow!"

"The Christian doth not curse a foe;
No, not such foe as he, who stood
Red in young Ulric's streaming blood,
Nor sated with one harmless life,
Upraised o'er me the murderous knife.
But Heaven was pleased to spare—I fled,
Turned hitherward my dubious tread,
And sure had passed thy stumbers by,
But for the jaguar's threatening eye,
That marked thee for his prey. I crave
Thy guidance toward the eastern wave,
Where haply floats, beside the strand,
Some banner of my native land."

" Izram hath sworn, and he will bide
 In truth and fealty by thy side.
 But say, for well my soul doth ken
 The brood of yon Iberian den,
 What name bears he, the hound of death,
 Who checked thy brother's vital breath?"
 " Almarez Gondolph, high in rank,"—
 Upstarting from the mossy bank,
 With arm extended Izram stood,
 Like the roused monarch of the wood:
 His eye-balls shot with crimson fire,
 Each reddening feature flushed with ire,
 While joy's triumphant wildness shone
 In the stern glance, and swelled the tone.

" Now hear, thou blazing god of day,
 Unfaltering in thy destined way,
 Who rollest on thy fiery path,
 Blasting the rebel climes in wrath,

Frowning to wither, blight, destroy,
Or beaming light, and life, and joy ;
And hear ye clouds, that, hurrying past,
Waft spirits wild on storm and blast ;
Ye demons, who delight to dwell
In the dark wave's tumultuous swell,
Or, wrapped in subterranean fire,
Work your fierce will in quenchless ire ;
Hear, and attest, in murmurs deep,
The vow of vengeance ne'er to sleep :
Proclaim in thunder, seal in blood,
The tie of vengeful brotherhood !”

Once more beneath the branches flung,
The traveller's shrinking hand he wrung :
“ I deemed not mortal man should dare
In wrongs so deep, so dark, as mine,
In luxury so rich, to share ;
But, Briton, lo the cup is thine,

The draught of sweet revenge to drain,
 Till not one lingering drop remain.
 I've spread a wilier snare to-day,
 Than e'er enclosed the beast of prey :
 Before another sun be set,
 Thou'lt view the quarry in the net.
 I thought not to endure thy feet
 Within my deep unseen retreat ;
 But we are brothers, I have said,
 And waked the hope I will not mock ;
 Thy kindred blood on Gondolph's blade
 Shall be thy pass through flood and rock ;
 And from that rock thine arm may sweep
 His mangled carcase to the deep."

" Now shame upon thee, man of death !
 I told thee that I cursed him not ;
 And shall I dye my Christian faith
 With crimson taint, satanic blot ?

Far as the space from pole to pole
Be murderous thought from Albert's soul !
Nor shall such deed thy dwelling stain,
 O Mexican, nor foul thy hand,
Till prayer, and faith, and zeal be vain,
 To pluck away one burning brand."

" I like thy heat ; in this I view,
Fool though thou be, thy tale is true ;
If false, thou hadst not crossed me yet :
But, true or false, my steel is whet.
There's candour on thy quiet brow,
I neither doubt nor fear thee now.
Proceed, a sheltering roof is nigh,
And while my cares thy need supply,
My lip shall link that blood-hound's name
With the full record of his shame."

Then rising, with elastic tread,
Through many a winding path he led,

Free as the gamesome steed, whose mane
 Ne'er drooped beneath controuling rein ;
 And Albert, in the step of pride,

The form of lightness, mein of grace,
 Might almost deem his youthful guide

A sylvan shape of fabled race.

Some twenty summer suns had shed
 Their ripening fires on Izram's head ;
 His hue confessed the tawny glow,

Born of a fierce and fervid ray,
 But pale and clear the polished brow,
 Where ebon locks disordered stray :

And ever as impatiently

Aside their silken veil was thrown,
 Beneath its curve the glancing eye,
 Like lightning from the midnight sky,
 In awful beauty shone.

Something there was that mutely told,

No vulgar stamp was graven here ;

An impress cast in finer mould,
And nurtured in a gentler sphere,
Than might beseem those captive plains,
Crushed in Iberia's pond'rous chains.

Narrow and low the hut arose,
A summer bower for short repose,
Yet fenced around with thorn and stake,
From prowling foes that haunt the brake.
Roofed with the broad palmetto leaf,
That fan-like o'er the rafters spread,
And crested as a warrior chief,
Beneath its light and plummy head.
Amid the flower-wove lattice play
The quivering shade and stealing ray;
Floating on zephyr's liquid sigh,
A thousand dazzling forms are nigh,
That in the brilliant blaze unfold
Their gossamer besprent with gold.

There hums the insect bird, who gleams
 Glorious as day's departing beams ;
 Beneath the proud papilio pressed,
 The blossom bends its burdened crest ;
 He steps the flower, a conscious king,
 Or fans the bud with gorgeous wing ;
 And not a breeze can hover nigh,
 But teems with blended harmony ;
 As every leaf were vocal grown,
 And breathed a descant all its own,
 While bowed the palm with princely head,
 And wide a guardian shadow spread.

A simple couch of fragrant leaves,
 In purple cased, each guest receives ;
 And Izram, from his secret hoard,
 Profusely heaps the bending board
 With all the tempting fruits that lie
 Mellowing beneath a genial sky ;

And while their tints commingling glowed,
 A juice nectareous sparkling flowed,
 In shells of cocoa, richly bound
 With hoops of burnished gold around.

With winning grace, in courtly guise,
 The Mexican his comrade plies ;
 Selecting oft, with studious care,
 The choicest of their woodland fare ;
 With mirthful thought, and sportive smile,
 Cheering their sweet repast the while.

“ Inhale this cooling draught again ;
 Methinks those whiskered Dons would drain
 The luscious stream with bolder swell ;
 And if the goblet 'scaped, 'twere well.”
 “ Too tempting shines the glittering ore :
 What if their ken the scene explore ?”
 Dark radiance flashed from Izram's eye,
 Lightly he touched his dagger's hilt,

And smiled ; “ Perchance, in deeper dye,
 The rash intruder’s hide were gilt,
 Ere his profaning touch should tear
 The meanest flower that blushes there.”

“ How freely in the mortal strife
 Thy hand can sport with human life !
 I would not ape thy deadly skill,
 Purveyor to the yawning tomb ;
 Nor hurl a spirit, reeking still
 With crime, to its eternal doom.”

“ And yet, were wildest peril near,
 No flincher thou : I’ve watched thine eye,
 And not a mist of earthly fear
 Hath clouded that calm azure sky.
 By thy bold deed preserved, I long
 To call thee friend : our years the same,
 If right I guess ; in danger, wrong,
 United ; branded both with shame ;

Thou for thy Christian faith, and I
For unsold truth and loyalty."

Gone was the hour of lightsome glee,
His brow grew stern with bitter thought,
That like a sullen wintry sea
In mystery and darkness wrought.
Still, as to quell the rising pain,
His lips the sparkling goblet drain ;
His glance emits the gloomy fire
Of restless care and feverish ire.

Albert beheld, his gen'rous heart
In secret wept the exile's smart ;
He shuddered o'er a soul so young,
By murderous hate to vengeance stung,
And yearned upon his thorny way
To pour the beam of gospel-day.
But Izram, on his couch reclined,
With graceful gesture half arose ;

His waving locks are flung behind,
 His cheek with proud emotion glows,
 In measured phrase the accents ran,
 And thus the tale of wrong began.

“ Know’st thou Chiapa’s soil, where rise
 Wrecks of a glorious edifice ?
 Offspring of kingly sires, who shone
 On Mexico’s unconquered throne,
 Or, ranged upon her island shore,
 Purpled the lake with princely gore.
 Uprooted from their beauteous land,
 Once more engrafted, and taught to thrive
 Beneath Las Casas’ pitying hand,
 Who bade the drooping bough revive,
 Till, like their own Vanilla, veiled
 In mystery from the race accursed,
 Again their weeping country hailed
 Her royal stems, in secret nursed.

Even now, upon Chiapa's plain,
 Our ancient arts in freedom reign :
 The deathless wreath fair science gives,
 Full many a young Cazique receives ;
 Known but to them whose dearest pride
 Were to lie slaughtered near his side.
 Not these the upstart race, who reign
 By sufferance of the crafty foe,
 Exalted from the base-born train,
 To specious power and gilded show ;
 But sons of those illustrious dead,
 Who, each a warlike nation's head,
 With royal banner wide unrolled,
 Twice fifty thousand warriors led
 To battle for the isle of gold.

" To boast were vain ; I will not tell
 What streams in these blue channels swell ;
 The deed may shew :—no vulgar ire
 Can feed so broad, so calm a flame,

Nor aught but princely hate aspire
 To quarries of such noble game.

The deed shall shew :—another night,
 And vengeance waves her torch in light.

“ Embosomed in a peaceful vale,
 There dwelt—but wherefore spin the tale ?”
 —A flush was on his frowning brow,
 And fast the hurried accents flow :—
 “ ’Tis nought to thee who trained my mind,
 The hater now of human kind,
 I say but, of the hours I’ve known,
 That once they were, and they are flown
 Past, past—they come not if I would”—
 He drained the cup, and then pursued.

“ It was ’mid life’s unfolding charm,
 When hopes are high and hearts are warm,
 And young ambition, aiming wide,
 Would grasp the world to prop his pride,

A guest, with wiles of Satan fraught,
Chiapa's peaceful dwellings sought ;
A Jesuit,—of Iberia's race,—
Inquisitor,—a monk of place,—
Vile titles all:—to add another,
Yet viler, he was Gondolph's brother.
He marked me, and he won my ear
With tales wild boyhood loves to hear ;
I knew not then what hidden bait
Lured him in me to seek his fate ;
But thus it seems—my birth was high,
And many watched my destiny :
Child as I was, I oft had sate
With those who rule our free-born state,
Whose secret counsels may not pass
Beyond the threefold bolts of brass :
Some note of this had lately sped,
—Oppression will not lack its spies,
Nor tyranny forget to dread
The mustering tempest ere it rise.

Unwelcome rumours quickly flee,

The tidings Priest Anselmo heard,

And when he spread the twig for me,

Deemed he might lime a chattering bird.

So, while his flatteries won my ken,

And lured me to the Spanish den,

My treason was the corner-stone

He built his towering hopes upon.

Izram a traitor!"—Then he laughed

In bitterness, and freely quaffed:—

"No, not to them—O never, never,

Could tongue of guile or forceful hand,

The syren, or the dungeon, sever

Her Izram from his own sweet land:

Blighted this arm, if ere it flings

Dishonour on the race of kings!

"In furtherance of their sage design,

The Spanish seers received me well,

And, deep in learning's fruitful mine,

For me they op'd the secret cell.

I needs must laugh,—how, day by day,

They laboured on the rugged way,

And placed within my eager clasp

Whate'er my spirit longed to grasp:

No page of all their classic lore,

But I had conned it o'er and o'er,

And from the tomes of history torn

New fuel for my burning scorn,

Ere yet the purblind fools could dare

To deem me wrapped within the snare.

And still misgivings vexed their mind,

A firmer tie the demons twined;

O would my tongue had never moved

To tell it! Albert, hast thou loved?

— Enough, enough; that broken sigh,

And mantling cheek, too well reply.

It matters not; I will not bend

My thought to such bewildering theme,

My spurning soul hath learned to rend

The shreds of that deceitful dream ;

Nor could thy tranquil spirit pine

In love so wild, so deep as mine.

The sorcerers hoped this potent spell

The patriot throb should lightly quell,

This master-passion in my breast,

Like Aaron's rod, engulf the rest ;

If e'er their eyes His page explored,

Whom they in blasphemy adored.

“ Now Gondolph joined the robber band

Who gnaw the vitals, wring the land.

Thou know'st, perchance, each plundering tool

Is licenced to a short-lived rule :

Three summers, decked in pomp and pride,

They rack our race, our treasure drain,

Then, wafted o'er th' indignant tide,

Disgorge the spoil in hungry Spain.

Long had this Gondolph ruled unseen
 The movements of a vast machine ;
 The guerdon of his toils to glean,
 He ploughed at length the azure deep :—
 Oh, by this sickle, bright and keen,
 A plenteous harvest he shall reap !

“ His was the crafty wile, that snared
 The heedless Mexican to rove ;
 His wizard hand the spell prepared,
 Of lofty lore, and witching love :
 And blithely now the traitor came,
 To light the pile with sulph'rous flame.
 In courteous guise, with flattering word,
 He led me to the festal board :
 Trained to his beck, the servile throng
 The revel and debauch prolong ;
 While he, with cool observance, sought
 In cobweb coil to snare the thought ;

Essayed—the wine-cup freely plied—
 To wake the slumbering chord of pride ;
 But all was vain, no word revealed
 The charge in patriot honour sealed.
 Baffled and chafed, the tyger scowled,
 And hourly in my pathway prowled,
 And oft in joyous scorn I threw
 Some mocking hope before his view,
 Till, weary of the secret snare,
 He laid his shameless purpose bare.
 A life, with wealth and greatness crowned,
 Ev'n to ambition's utmost bound,
 This was the bribe ; the threat was shame,
 The taint of slander's foulest breath,
 A curse attached to Izram's name
 Among his race, and lingering death.

“ I know not how my scorn might blaze ;
 He quailed and shook beneath the gaze :

And when, in proud indignant strain,
 I hurled the treason back on Spain,
 His lurking blood-hounds seized their prey,
 And bore me from the light of day,
 Chained with the felon crew, who pine
 Condemned within the deadliest mine.
 Robber and murderer, side by side,
 In groans and blood their labour plied—
 Seest thou the scar those fetters wrought?
 His look shall wither on the spot.

“ Nor yet the crafty fox resigned
 That dream of his besotted mind;
 Still came the lure, the menace, still
 He thought to bend my stedfast will:
 He blighted my fair fame, and she,
 Chord of my heart, its vital tide,
 Compelled to wed a vile Mestee,
 Became the motley mongrel's bride.

Anselmo's self the tale conveyed,
 And well his generous zeal I paid :
 Too weak the cowl to guard his brain
 From the fierce dash of severed chain ;
 And while they thronged around the dead,
 Goaded by maddening thought, I sped
 Until the distant glimmering ray
 Pointed to liberty and day.
 I found a faithful few :—the rest
 Is doubly sealed within my breast :
 I doubt not thee, but oaths confine
 Those secrets to our ancient line :
 Yet if thy British nerve can brave
 The horrors of an outlaw's cave,
 And if thy strength, in peril tried,
 Can boldly breast a swelling tide,
 Soon shall thy gladdened sight survey
 Gondolph, by counter-wiles betrayed,
 Groaning his blackened soul away,
 An offering to thy brother's shade."

" My brother's shade hath soared, to rest
 In the calm mansions of the blest ;
 And there, at his Redeemer's throne,
 He joins the rapturous song of praise,
 To Him who hears the sinner's groan,
 Jesus, whose pardoning love is shewn
 To ruined man's rebellious race.
 And deem'st thou—if his spirit share
 In aught of sublunary care—
 My Ulric would not rather flee
 On seraph wing to ward the blow,
 And plead, by Him who died for thee,
 For mercy on the prostrate foe?"

" Forbear thy mockery, tongue of pride !
 For me that Saviour never died.
 Thou preaching friar forbear, and say,
 My proffered courtesy dost thou take,
 Till twice return the morning ray,
 With me thy fixed abode to make?"

"Aye, Izram, and to save thy soul
 The bitter fruit of deed so foul;
 My wrong is deep, far deeper thine,
 But vengeance is the work of God:
 O let thy hand this task resign,
 Submit thee to the chastening rod.
 Revenge to carnal lip is sweet,
 But kills the soul with pois'nous breath;
 And thou, impenitent, wilt meet
 The wages of eternal death."

"Izram can neither pause nor fear;
 His sin, if such the term, hath stored
 The wrath of Heaven in long arrear,
 And justice must unsheath the sword,
 She still a deeper debt may owe—
 But truce with this, the sun is low;
 I pledge thee in a sweeter draught
 Than yet thy thirsty lip hath quaffed:

Recline on yonder couch, and steep
 Thy feverish frame in cooling sleep :
 Trust me, no cause for doubt or dread
 While Izram watches nigh thy bed.
 I love thy race—they never bore
 A blood-stained trophy from my shore,
 Save when the daring Buccaneer,
 Sceurge of the tyrants, hovered nigh,
 And woke the Spaniard's startled ear,
 With the fierce midnight battle-cry.
 Thou dost not fear to speak me plain,
 To cross me in my angry vein ;
 Nor dost thou shame to kneel and pray :"—
 Shading his sight, he turned away,
 And Albert, with unruffled breast,
 Composed his weary limbs to rest.

CANTO II.

SWEET his repose, but strangely new
The waking scene ; no lowly shed,
No waving forest caught his view ;
A wide and vaulted cavern threw
Its mighty arch above his head.
A glimmering lamp in scanty flood
Dispersed its light, and Izram stood,
Folding his mantle round his breast,
Half veiled in the sepulchral gloom,
With thoughtful brow, and head depressed,
Viewing the couch of peaceful rest,
Like sculpture on a costly tomb.

"Wak'st thou, my friend?" the pensive tone,
 That sorrow might have called her own,
 Low as the ring-dove's plaintive sound,
 By echoes caught, above, around,
 Rang through the caves, and died away
 In cadence like a funeral lay.

"Izram! explain this magic spell."

"No magic, but the needful guile
 Of souls oppressed; I watched thee well,
 And practised nought but friendly wile.
 Here is my palace, this my throne,
 A regal court, as thou shalt own,
 When my assembled hoards bespeak
 The treasury of a young Cazique."

Smiling, yet sad, he spoke, and drew

A drapery's heavy fold aside;
 Broad gleams of distant radiance threw
 A steady lustre far and wide.

"Arise, the sun is high and bright,
 But never shot his living light

Within these vaults : dark as the fame
 Of Mexico, they need the toil
 Of secret hands to raise the flame,
 And oft renew the wasting oil.
 Above, oppression's shaft is hurled,
 Below, the infant fires are nursed,
 That, should the struggling splendours burst,
 With blazing flag shall cow the world.
 Tyrants engross the sunny sky,
 Be ours the den and liberty !"
 With stately port, and echoing tread,
 Through the long widening vault he led ;
 Passed a low arch, and dark alcove :—
 Where hath the spell our pilgrim borne ?
 Such wild illusion ne'er was wove
 In the fantastic dream of morn.
 They stood beneath a lofty dome,
 Meet for the fabled genii's home ;

The giant roof, bestud with spars,
 Shone as a host of distant stars.
 Here, crystal columns, shooting high,
 Dazzle and pain the blinking eye ;
 There, glowing as with secret fire,
 Slight shafts of wreathing gold aspire.
 Framed by the fairest rules of art,
 From every secret nook they start ;
 New treasures to the gaze unfold,—
 Gold was the couch, the table gold ;
 Wrought by the craftsman's cunning hand,
 In bright confusion, close array,
 Flagon's, and bowls, and vases stand,
 And on their burnished sides display
 The swelling fruit, or garland fair ;—
 The very least that glittered there
 Had been an ample bribe, to gain
 Some kingly suit from grasping Spain.
 Quiver and bow and breast-plate hung
 Standards and feathery tufts among ;

And sun-like orbs too well reveal
 The deadly dint of forceful steel;
 While pigmy plumes, of matchless dyes,
 Combined in graphic beauty, rise,
 Implanting in that rocky den
 The charms of mountain, mead, and glen.

Izram beneath his dark lash stole
 A glance, to read his comrade's soul.
 "What say'st thou, Albert, canst thou show
 In thy fair isle so rich a throne?
 Nay, answer not; full well I know

She calls one glorious gem her own,
 A jewel fraught with deathless rays,
 Whose faintest sparkles far outblaze
 Ten thousand gaudy scenes like this:
 Freedom and faith—O dream of bliss!"
 He paused, and slowly raising up
 From the bright board a costly cup,

Viewed it a while, then fiercely flung
 On the firm floor that beaming gold ;
 Their peals the clamorous echoes rung,
 While to the utmost side it rolled.
 " I loathe the yellow dross, it hurled
 My fathers from a lordly throne,
 Ev'n as that bruised ore is whirled
 Along the ruthless stone.
 Metal accursed ! my brethren pine,
 Through thee, beneath an iron rod,
 Deep in the pestilential mine,
 O'er which their sires in glory trod.
 Now could I dash from side to side
 The fragments of this scenic pride ;
 But they have work to do, to sting,
 Ev'n to his very inmost soul,
 That Gondolph, that compounded thing
 Of wile and avarice :—we will toll
 The death-knell on his shrinking ear,
 Amid the splendid mockeries here :

Here, where his eye could never sate

With gazing, we will seal his fate ;

And I, the fettered slave, who drew

A length of chain in pois'nous mine,

Will blight the tyrant's wildered view

In garb befitting regal line.

Thou, too, shalt glitter bright, in gems

Meet for imperial diadems :

Weave diamonds in thy clustering hair,

Like stars on evening's folding wing,

And on thy very sandals bear

The ransom of an eastern king."

" No gems for me."—" And wherefore thwart

Each purpose of my labouring heart ?"—

" Nay, Izram, smooth thy brow, nor deem

I cross thy will in sullen mood ;

But how shall rich array beseem,

Or brilliants pour their sparkling beam,

Amid the specks of kindred blood ?

Scarce dry upon my conscious vest
 The stream that welled from Ulric's breast ;
 Behold !"—" The hour of doom is near,
 Let vengeance stay that bursting tear :
 Fraternal love hath gemmed thy cheek

With drops to shame our Indian mine,
 And Izram's heart perchance could speak
 In tone as kindly and as meek

As ever woke the pulse of thine :
 But I will drown that pleading breath
 In the loud trumpet blast of death :
 Retain thy simple weed, to roll

Its witness on the murderer's soul ;
 Dark be thy wrath as frowning night,
 And mine as dire volcano bright."

Swift as the linnet from the spray,
 His lightsome step hath sped away ;
 And Albert breathes the secret groan,
 For woes more lasting than his own.

“ So young, so beauteous, so enslaved
 To Satan's bidding—lost—depraved
 By sins unnumbered: yet he spoke

Of pleadings he would fain controul;
 Perchance the Lord indeed hath woke

A voice within his conscious soul.
 ‘ Freedom and faith, a dream of bliss’—

Oh would that waking prize were his!

My spirit loathes his foul intents,

Yet with a mother's woe laments:

Gladly I'd brave a life of pains,

To wrest him from these burning chains.

Confederate in his fell design,

Leagued to destroy, yet fixed to save

His victim,—Saviour, be it mine

To call this slumberer from the grave!

Bid him awake, and rise to view

Beams that can pierce his darkness through.

It were a miracle—what less

Could change our heart of mortal mould?

Speak, and the work is done—now bless
Thy word—O Lord, our Righteousness,
Conduct this wanderer to thy fold !”

While yet he breathed the broken prayer,
The fiery Mexican was there :
He came on Albert’s wondering sight,
Like some gay dream of fairy sprite :
His form, in snow-white vest arrayed,
Its beauteous symmetry displayed ;
Soft as the wing of summer fly,
His robe outshone the Tyrian dye !
Each naked arm a circlet wore
Of pearls to shame a regal store ;
The emerald and the ruby graced
His ancles, tissued gold his waist.
The plumes—his country’s coronet—
Enwreathed among his locks of jet,
With every gesture waving, bow
Majestic o’er his graceful brow.

Their quills in clustering diamonds bound,
 They breathed a costly perfume round,
 And rivalled, in their glancing dyes,
 The glories of the western skies.

The tress confined, his brow was bare,
 Softened in thought, and pale with care.

Though from his eye-beam toil had reft

 Awhile the fervid blaze of noon,
 Yet all the floating light was left

 That steals around the midnight moon.

A naked dirk his belt displayed,

Its ivory hilt with gold inlaid,

And rich with gems ; the tempered blade

 Gleamed a blue death-fire, sternly bright ;

And Albert's sickening thought surveyed

 The unborn horrors of the night.

Abrupt he spoke, " Thou dazzling sin,

I would thou wert as fair within."

" Nay, Albert, all within is dark ;

 These gauds no living lustre shed ;

Revenge alone, with crimson spark,

Lights the drear mansions of the dead.

It is for such as thee to dwell

In rays that demons cannot quell.

My soul is black as thunder's cloud,—

The gathering peal will echo loud,

And fierce the flash : this louring gloom

Is but the shade of Gondolph's tomb.

I have not slumbered since I lay

Beneath the jaguar's gaze—Away!

We'll to the bowl, and nectar drain,

Till young life bound in every vein."

" And would'st thou feed the angry mood,

With wilder fire inflame thy blood,

Hurl reason from her tottering throne,

And change thy heart to very stone!

O drink thou of the stream that swells

Far from the scenes of ruthless strife,

Drawn from the everlasting wells,

That spring beneath the tree of life."

In wayward humour, Izram flung
 His limbs upon a couch of pride,
 Its canopy with plumage hung,
 And feigning regal scorn, replied—
 “What! bar me from the gen’rous bowl?
 Ev’n here my lordly will controul?
 Rebel, wilt thou dethrone thy king?”
 “Jest not, but heed.”—“I will not hear;
 If but one native note I sing,
 These loyal echoes straight will ring,
 With descant meet for monarch’s ear.
 Now mark.”—In cadence sweet and strong
 Sudden he raised a lofty song.

Izram.

“Line, in the annals of glory known,
 “Where have ye hidden your ancient throne?
 “Throbs no bold current in regal vein?
 “Be ye the vassals of ruffian Spain?

"The base surmise from my soul I fling—

"Ye are the nation; where's your king?"

Richly the clear melodious sound

Floats through the sparry caverns round;

And ere the notes could melt away,

Abruptly rose an answering lay;

Strong voices pealed it loud and nigh,

Filling the vaults with harmony.

Voices.

"Deep, where the heavings of life arise,

"Deep in the subject's heart he lies;

"Deep, where the infant gem is born,

"He tramples the yellow gold in scorn:

"His tapestried hall is the crystal stone,

"The diamond his lamp, and the rock his throne."

Iram.

"Once, where the isle's blue waters swell,

"Her princes fought, and her nobles fell;

- “ The meanest in Aztlan’s native train
 “ Was peer for the proudest that forge their chain.
 “ Soft through its channel the pure wave runs,
 “ Shrouding the heroes—Where are their sons?”

Voices.

- “ Deep, where the close-pent air abides ;
 “ Deep, where the flood its fountain hides ;
 “ Deep, where the young volcano’s nursed ;—
 “ Woe to the land when their rage shall burst !
 “ Soon may the volume of fate unfold
 “ That the sons are true, as the sires were bold.”

Iram.

- “ Where are the counsels, wise and brave,
 “ To guide the ship through the troublous wave ?
 “ The skill to watch for the breaking morn,
 “ The league to bind and the word to warn ?
 “ The glimmering sparks of a rising blaze,
 “ And the heart-cheering records of olden days ?”

Voices.

“ Deep in the bosoms of patriot worth ;
“ Deep in the soil that gives them birth ;
“ Deep in the symbol of mystic lore,
“ That never shall treachery’s gaze explore :
“ The root is spreading below—the tree
“ Shall rise in a banner of pride¹ for thee.”

Triumphant pealed the closing strain ;
 The very echoes seemed to glow
With patriot ardour ; oft again,
 When the bold note was sinking low,
Some distant cavern caught the tone,
And made the lofty lay its own,
And gave it back again, to swell
And rise, through many a winding cell ;
Careering round the giant dome,
 As though some pitying forms of air
 Blended the wild sweet chorus there,
To grace an exiled monarch’s home.

Albert, entranced, a while forgot
 The captive's doom, the murderer's lot,
 Yearning to bid the caves prolong,
 And still renew that thundering song.

The full red torches flickered wide,
 The banners waved in martial pride,
 Sparkled the crystals ; Izram's eye,

To ecstasy relit, and raised
 In uncurbed majesty on high,
 With answering splendour keenly blazed.

The sound dissolved, the spell was broke,
 Drooping his waving plumes he spoke.
 " Hearts fond and true ! far other meed
 Than darksome den, and venturous deed,
 From Izram might ye claim. Now speak,
 Thou silent Briton ; well I trace,
 In the bold blood that warms thy cheek,
 The fervor of thy free-born race.

What miracle hath struck thee dumb—
The preacher by the man o'ercome?"

"Perchance some tinge of honest shame,
For slight respect to monarch shewn;
Thy sin I hate, the sinner blame;
And if, thy regal rank unknown"——

"O peace, my friend; my brother, peace:
When thy bold faithful counsels cease,
Izram is lost indeed: I love
To hear thy fearless tongue reprove,
But deemed it well to shew thy speech
To other ears than mine might reach.
These caverns teem with life; a race
Of nobles, this dark dwelling grace.
They know the jaguar's dauntless foe,
Thy daring deed, thy wrongs they know;
But other themes beseech them not:

Think'st thou my single arm could bring

Thee slumbering from the woodland cot ?

That were a feat for fairy king."

While thus in playful grace he spoke,
Sudden the startling echoes woke,
As though a wide battalion sped,
With one broad flash, the winged lead.
Izram in on his feet : his lip

Quivers ; his veins to blackness swell :

" They come ! triumphant vengeance dip

Deep in the flames, where demons dwell,
Thy crimson torch !" With furious stride,
Swift to the central space he hied :
Then with a whistle, loud and shrill

As eaglet's scream, the signal gave ;
And figures, darkly mantled, fill

The niches of each opening cave :
On every head bright plumage played,
The rest was wrapped in folding shade.

Their chieftain waves the circling sign,
 And sternly speaks—"No hand but mine."
 Their lofty crests in silence bow,
 And the fair plumes dance on every brow.

Again th' exulting echoes rung,
 While wide a massy door was flung,
 And fiercely struggled, half repressed,
 The burning ire in Albert's breast,
 And wildly throbbed his temperate blood,
 When to his frowning glance confessed

His brother's murderer stood:
 'Twas nature's fever; mercy rolled
 Her current, and the fire controled.
 Blinded beneath the burst of light,
 The Spaniard veiled his aching sight;
 Then proudly, with expanding eye,
 Drew his majestic form on high,
 And firmly stepped, with measured pace,
 The features of his foe to trace.

The youth in bitter mockery
 Bent, till the plumes had kissed his knee,
 Then tossed them, while with fiery gaze
 His eye belied the courtly phrase,—
 “ Thrice welcome be th’ Iberian lord
 To exiled Izram’s humble board.”
 (Full well betrayed the sudden start
 How shot that name through Gondolph’s heart.)
 “ Fain would the Mexican repay,
 Well as attainted traitor may,
 The rites of Gondolph’s princely dome,
 That cheered his spirit many a day,
 Ere yet his steps behaved to roam.”
 Then burst the smothered fury high,
 “ Ruffian ! thine hour of doom is nigh !”
 Calm, in his fixed obdurate pride,
 The Spaniard spoke, untouched by fear ;
 “ While Izram in my view shall bide,
 Murder, I judge, must needs be near.”

Darting his glances round, they rest
 On Albert's form, and crimson vest :
 Shrunk the firm eye. " What ! can ye call
 The dead to your infernal hall ?
 And who are these ? a goodly train,
 Fresh reeking from the lash and chain ;—
 Ye native bondsmen, lured to stray,
 By this mad boy, from duty's way,
 Liegemen of Spain ! the crime disown ;
 Those dainty limbs in fetters bind,
 Bend to your sovereign's outraged throne,
 Forgiveness seek ; his royal mind
 The grace will freely grant." A sound
 Of stifled laughter murmured round.
 " Before our sovereign's outraged throne,
 Duteous we bend : we'll bind him well ;
 In fetters he shall joy to own,
 Ev'n loyal love's securest spell."
 With dimpling smile and glowing cheek,
 Izram exclaims, " Essay once more ;

Pardon's faint breath is all too weak,—

What think'st thou, if the glittering store
Of wealthy Spain might change their song?

Gold, gold, my lord, is wondrous strong.

If all thy bandit tribes could drain

Forth from the land's exhausted vein,

Since first they trod the vanquished isle,

And all the coffered hoards of Spain

Were rifled out to swell the pile,

That mass might almost match the place

That Gondolph's presence deigns to grace."

Then in a tone more sternly slow,

Where hate and pride commingling glow,

"Hear, thou abhorred! this costly mine

Were but the shadow of a shade,

Measured by those our princely line

Have never to the grasp betrayed

Of impious foes. Our stores could buy

Fleets to command the subject waves,

Cities to pierce the wondering sky,
 Empires for toys, and kings for slaves."

The Spaniard curled his lip in scorn—
 "Methinks the yoke is lightly borne :
 Why club ye not your stores, to buy
 The glittering bauble, liberty ?
 Why bribe ye not, with ample pence,
 Some stout ally to chace us hence,
 And on their ancient seat replace
 Your puny and diminished race ?"

A sullen murmur muttering crept
 From the dark bands ; and Izram stept,
 Glaring beneath his scowling brow,
 Like a chafed lion on the foe :
 " Burning mid everlasting fires,
 In torments yell your murderous sires ;
 Mated with him, who first in crime,
 Brought ruin into Eden's clime.

Diminished ! aye, beneath the yoke
 How many a gallant heart hath broke !
 How have the mighty bowed in death,
 Blighted by pestilential breath ;
 The beauteous drooped, and died away
 Before oppression's blasting ray ;
 Leaving a remnant firm and true,
 Noble and brave—but oh how few !
 Shall we profane our sacred store,

And bribe some distant robber band,
 Greedy of sordid hire, to pour

Destruction on the groaning land ?
 Earth from her dregs could ne'er defile
 Our country with a pest so vile,
 Nor vomit forth a crew so base
 As dark Iberia's felon race ;
 Yet seek we not with foreign steel

The ripening crop of weeds to mow,
 A parricidal hand shall deal

With deeper gash the destined blow,

And o'er your pride, your towering pride,
In bold career exulting ride.

There lurks, within the womb of fate,

A sorer pang, a deadlier bane,
Than eastern scorn or western hate

Could mingle in the cup of Spain :
Spawn from her own corruption-bred,
Then on their putrid parent-fed.

Oft hath my spirit rose in glea
A glimpse of coming times to see,
When the unwieldy cub shall breathe
Defiance in his parent's teeth ;

To hear the angry beldame chide,
In contest with the heedless air ;
Her blood-stained talons stretching wide,
Across th' Atlantic's laughing tide,
In impotent despair."

"Thou taunting fool! though wayward fate
The augury of thy brain-sick hate

Should e'en fulfil, what higher grace
 Than change of lords awaits thy race?
 Loosened awhile the servile chain,
 Tools for their need, then locked again."

"Take thou no care for that: we hold
 The master-key, the secret gold:

Let Liberty's resplendent eye
 Once beam, then farewell jealousy!
 Let Freedom's lightsome banner play,
 And, brethren, leagued in firm array,

We conquer, or we die!
 What reck we,—so your caitiff blood
 Be mingled with your cities' mud;—
 What reck we,—so your leagured town

Re-echo to the thundering guns;
 Though they who spill the crimson flood,
 And rend the flaunting standard down,
 And trample on the empty crown,

Should be the tyrants' sons?

Just heaven, retributive in wrath,
Will hide that serpent in your path,
 In memory of the shameful wile,
That lured the bands of Tlascala
To mingle in the impious fray,
 Against th' imperial isle.
Then shall Chiapa's sons arise,
And pour the reeking sacrifice
To names that in her mystic roll
Live to inflame the warrior's soul.
Long by your blinking race forgot,
Their eye can mark the very spot
Where the firm aim of justice sped
The bolt to Montezuma's head :
To vengeful gaze the site unfold,
Where rose Mexitli's pile of gold,
 The temple of an erring creed,
 But sanctified by noblest deed,
In history's page enrolled.

There, in his sacrilegious pride,

Glutting his savage eye with blood,

Presiding o'er the purple tide,

The fell hyæna, Cortez, stood.

Aside their spears and quivers flung,

'Twas there the princely brothers came,

And, kneeling, to his mantle clung,

Bold barter! with a moment's shame

To purchase never-dying fame,

And venge their country's cause: around,

In suppliant guise, their arms they wound,

With awful pause, a breathless space,

The homage in abhorrence given,

—Twin seraphs dwelling on the face

Of that arch-rebel spurned from heaven—

They bent on his accursed brow,

With upward gaze, the beaming eye,

And silently arose the vow,

Not to the tyrant, but the sky.

They pointed to the battle plain,
 Where swelled and sunk, in plummy surge,
 The billows of the fight; they strain
 Their youthful sinews; bend, and gain,
 With their dark prize, the giddy verge:
 Wreathing in stern embrace their prey,
 They hurl them from the height;
 Wrapped, like the sinking orb of day,
 In a shroud of native light."

" But watchful Heaven preserved its own;
 The wily traitors died alone."

" Alone! how deep the conscious flood
 Blushed with the taint of Spanish blood,
 And murmured, in its patriot bed
 To harbour such polluting dead,
 When, sickening deep with wild affright,
 Beneath the favouring veil of night,

The panting robbers fled for life,
 And perished in the causeway strife!
 Alone! why every element

Hath leagued in freedom's sacred cause;
 The earth her firm enclosure rent,

And opened her devouring jaws:
 Along your veins the fire hath crept,

While pestilence, with vengeful gust,
 Wide o'er your vaunting armies swept,

And breathed them into dust.
 Your crimes the circling years rehearse,

Pointing the deep unuttered curse:
 The glorious sun looks fiercely down,

And withers you with scorching frown;
 The sullen mists enfold you round,

And strike unseen the aguish wound:
 Ye spread the banquet, rich and fair,

Intemperance drops her poison there:
 While lazy monks the gains devour

Of many a long laborious hour,

And tax you with a galling price
 For juggling feats and fooleries.
 Homeward the shrivelled remnant wend,
 Wasted by care, debauch, and toil,
 As yellow as the gold they rend,
 And parched like the exhausted soil ;
 Their public seal the robbers shew,
 Murder's black signet stamps the brow ;
 And grinning fiends, with greedy eyes,
 Unnoticed haunt each branded prize.
 Methinks I view the victims rolled
 In burning seas of molten gold,
 And hear the taunts, the laughter shrill,
 ' Now, sons of avarice, grasp your fill.'

With ghastly smile the Spaniard sought
 To veil the pang of shuddering thought.
 " Albeit thy phrase is aptly set,
 I weary of the prating speech ;—

A wondering congregation met

To hear one half-taught savage preach.

I ween 'twas in Anselmo's school

Thou learn'dst to rail and rant by rule."

His mock the youth unruffled heard :—

" Thou yet shalt bide that railing word,

My private wrong will plead in vain ;

This blade a nation's vengeance wreaks,

Not Izram to Almarez speaks,

But Mexico to Spain.

Cast round thine eye and view the spoil,

Of free-born hands the willing toil,

Relics of matchless worth : behold

Those arrows in their sheaths of gold,

Studded with gems : the rusted darts,

Drawn from the robbers' quivering hearts ;

The warrior belts of jewels twined,

Yon plummy crowns with pearls combined :

Elastic plates of scaly mail,
 For manly war; too slight and frail
 To bide the dint of murderous lead,
 From Spain's infernal engines sped.
 These plume-wrought banners, drooping now
 Beneath the sheltering earth, again
 To combat borne, shall float and bow,
 Rejoicing, o'er the piles of slain,
 While Guatimozin's battle-word
 Loud through the vengeful field is heard,
 And hearts of wrath intensely flame
 At that imperial martyr's name;
 And mocking demons blithely spread,
 In nether gulfs, such flowery bed
 For your eternal rest, as lay
 Glowing beneath your guiltless prey:
 —Though slumbering justice linger yet,
 Deeply she'll pay the burning debt.—
 Gondolph, now sate thy favoured eye
 On that mysterious treasury,

Whose warrior monarch, firm in will,
 Baffled thy father's fiendish skill;
 Constant in torture, shame, and death,

To us the rich bequest he gave,
 And ne'er till now Iberian breath

Tainted the golden cave :
 But thou hast earned the grace to fall
 Within this dungeon's glittering wall."

" Aye, like the captive heroes, slain
 Beneath your hideous idol-fane ;
 Whose heart-pulse, bared by butcher-knife,
 Bounded and throbbed with struggling life
 On the foul shrine, and slaked the thirst
 Of ruthless cannibals ; accursed
 By earth and heaven. What did we more
 Than baulk your gods of human gore ?
 Dispatching with a swifter stroke

Those tens of thousands doomed to die,

Beneath Mexitli's demon yoke,
 In torture, rage, and blasphemy.
 Had fate restrained the righteous hand,
 That swept this wrath-devoted land,
 Your sacrificial knives had gored
 More victims than our conquering sword."

With eye reproachful, sad, and stern,
 Fixed the dark youth his piercing gaze :
 " And came your Christian band to turn
 Those sinners from destruction's ways ?
 To burst the veil of mental night,
 And spread their hoard of gospel light
 Wide o'er the lovely fertile spot,
 Enrobed, by Him we worshipped not,
 In Eden's garb ? the fairest gem
 On nature's brilliant diadem.
 Ye found a clime where seraph guest
 Might fold the downy wing and rest ;

Epitome of every grace
 Strewed o'er creation's dwelling-place ;
 As western skies had kissed the earth,
 Enamoured of her beauteous birth,
 And stamped their tints, divinely fair,
 On every tribe that nestled there,
 Till bird, and flower, and insect glowed,
 Bright as the vesper sun's abode ;
 And deep the burning radiance rolled,
 Ripening her very dust to gold ;
 And kindling in her caverns drear
 Such diamond sparks as glimmer here.
 Spreads not the lake its crystal breast
 To woo again that azure guest ?
 While emulous, with crested brow,
 Cedar and palm arise to bow ;
 And Andes, in officious love,
 Impels his giant bulk above,
 To prop the glorious arch, and shroud
 His head in evening's purple cloud.

So nature wrought : admiring man
With duteous zeal pursued the plan ;
Culling, to deck his varied store,
The charm she wove, the robe she wore :
Nurtured the infant race of flowers
In broad parterre, and perfumed bowers ;
Leading the silvery founts to play
Through sculptured forms in freshening spray ;
Taught the transparent beam to roam
On marble wall, and jasper dome ;
Earth's secret treasures displayed
In pillared porch and colonnade :
Lofty and bold the turrets swell,
As mountains from the western dell ;
Innumerable and bright they blaze,
As dew-drops in the morning's gaze :
And softly smiled the star of eve,
Where gold and flowers the net enwreathes ;
While, in unfelt captivity,
Their wildest notes the warblers sing,

And spread beneath a mimic sky

The glancing crest, and glorious wing,
Till, rich in death, their beauties live
In prouder tints than art can give :
Dear was that native skill—how dear
The few poor wrecks that moulder here !

“ Nor lordly man unlettered trod
The glittering court and sylvan sod :
In nature’s darkest thralldom pent,
Her chain his soaring spirit rent,
Rose through the wildering mist, and caught
The day-beam of inspiring thought ;
Science illumed his searching eye,
And empire crowned his policy :
Through space unmeasured, undefined,
He led the conquering march of mind ;
Firm as the targe his shoulder bore,
And pliant as the plume he wore.

Ye say, that, o'er this dazzling scene,
 Spirits of ill, and powers unclean,
 Usurping, rolled an impious flood
 Of cruelty, pollution, blood ;
 While ye, in heaven-sent mercy, came
 To blanch the blushing spot of shame,
 And plant upon the guilty sod
 The banner of a Saviour-God.

" Piercing the soft complying moss,
 Securely stands your mocking cross ;
 And forward wends your pious tread,
 By avarice goaded, strumpet-led.
 Forward ! your church hath blessed the strife,
 Your arms are primed, and gold is rife :
 A monarch feeds your craving eyes
 With glittering ore, and gems of price :
 Grasp at your will the tempting store,
 Persuasive guns shall plead for more.

Forward ! the young blade never bent
 Beneath a mounted armament ;
 The fools combine, in erring plan,
 Each noble beast with ruffian man,
 And judge artillery's thunder given
 From the dark cloud that wraps their heaven.
 Then, while the awe-struck tribes discern
 These monster-gods in mission zeal,
 Your righteous creed they quickly learn,
 Baptized in blood, and shrived with steel.
 Forward ! some million harmless lives
 Must dew your consecrated knives :
 Shout, while ye drive the weapon home,
 ‘ The gold for Spain ! the gore for Rome ! ’

“ Blasphemer, cease ! ” — “ Indulge the mood,
 For I am born of stubborn blood :
 My sires, who yon bright banner bore,
 Would none of Rome's pacific lore :

They knew not Quiabíslan's league,
 Nor Zempoalla's dark intrigue ;
 Nor, like the Tlascalán, unbound,
 With rending hand, their country's wound :
 Descending from a regal throne,
 They made the empire's cause their own ;
 They towered amid the battle swell,
 And bravely fought, and freely fell.
 Victims for Guatimozín's sake,

What time he spread his galley's wing,
 And launched upon the fatal lake,
 That murmured round her captive king,
 Tradition tells the crimson stain
 On yonder shield was drawn from Spain ;
 And vengeance whispers, ' Now renew
 With kindred dye its faded hue.'

Here dwell the very gods who led

Your fathers to the western shore,

Sustaining their infuriate tread,
 Through leagured hosts, and seas of gore.
 Those golden gods, so safely stored
 In guise of pillar, couch, and board ;
 These flagons, where the deep-set rim
 Of sparkling rubies crowns the brim ;
 For these they dared the battle plain,
 For these ye plough the briny main ;
 Such faith your pious deeds rehearse,
 Your deities, your spoil, your curse."

" And meet it is your yellow ore
 Should swell the Christian's sacred store ;
 From unbelievers rent by Heaven,
 And to its saints in guerdon given."

From Albert's lip an answer came,
 In accent stern he uttered, " Shame !
 The Lord will that foul charge disown ;
 Dishonour not the sacred name
 By which the Christian band are kn-

He who the mild commandment gave,

‘ Love ye the strangers,’ loved them well ;

He came not to destroy but save,

Mercy to teach, and rage to quell.

He came to heal, He came to bind

The broken heart, and wounded mind.

He licensed not the ruthless sword,

He values not the glittering hoard ;

Whoe’er shall base allegiance owe

To mammon, is Jehovah’s foe.

Peace is His word, His banner love,

His work the stony heart to move ;

His mercy, boundless, endless, free,

Gondolph, may even reach to thee :

To thee His grace can yet display

The fount, the purifying flood,

And from thy spirit roll away

That fearful spot—the guilt of blood.”

On Albert’s shoulder Izram pressed

A gentle hand—“ My brother cease :

Beam not upon his gloomy breast

The words of tenderness and peace.

Sealed by his crimes, that eye is dim ;

Preach to the rocks, but not to him."

" Dear Izram, do not bar my word"—

With proud derision Gondolph heard,

And laughed—" ' Dear Izram '—' brother '—see

How well may infidels agree !

The heretic, whose sturdy breed

Is famed for many a daring deed,

The English mastiff, meet to chase

A herd of Mexico's faint race,—

Let but our holy faith appear,

Scourge of the unbelieving mind,

And straight we view the dog and deer

In goodly fellowship combined.

Briton, what mak'st thou here the while ?

Some envoy from the upstart isle,

Sent to explore this wond'rous show,

Balance the peril 'gainst the bribe,—

And surely ye were worthier foe

To cope with, than this woman tribe.

Slaves! 'neath the conquering bands of Spain,

When havoc's glorious day begun,

Their armies darkened hill and plain,

And millions were opposed to one :

Crouching before a warrior's frown,

The trembling dastards lay in shoals ;

Our weary chargers trod them down,

And trampled out their worthless souls.

Cortez had won a nobler fame,

Had fate provided bolder game."

By the rude taunt to madness stung,

Izram with brandished dagger sprung ;

On high the flashing weapon shone—

" To Cortez and the fiends begone !"

Ere on the scowling foe he closed,

Albert his fierce career opposed.

"Izram, forbear; as thou would'st plead
 For mercy in thy dearest need,
 Slay not a soul."—"Now on thy life,
 Unloose thy hold, or dread the knife!"
 Foaming, he writhed, in wild disdain,
 Beneath that nervous grasp; in vain.
 Borne back a space by Albert's hand,
 He rallied to a desperate stand:
 With arm aloft, and breast to breast,
 Each in the grapple firmly stood;
 One movement—Izram's snowy vest
 Is dark with Albert's blood.

Forth rushed the band: tumultuous swell
 Discordant tones through vault and cell;
 Relaxed was Albert's straining grasp,
 Yet do his fingers faintly clasp
 The falling wrist:—to distance thrown,
 Rings the keen dirk upon the stone.

Round Gondolph swords and daggers shine,

But Izram bars the stern design.

“ Go, to the inner dungeon-grot

Bear him away, but harm him not :

A deeper vengeance yet shall drain

The pois’nous tide from every vein.”

Beneath his comrade’s drooping weight

Oppressed, he bends the trembling knee,

And groans. “ Oh, wretch accursed by fate !

My brother, have I murdered thee ?”

Albert’s faint smile consoling broke—

“ Haste, strip the arm, explore the wound :”

A channel, rived by slanting stroke,

Was swiftly closed, and smoothly bound,

And, on his lip the cordial peured,

He breathed, to life and sense restored.

“ Unhappy Izram ! hast thou wrought

All the fell purport of thy thought ?”

“ The monster lives ; I would not blend

His blood with thine : impetuous friend,

Why would'st thou urge thy headlong way
 Between the tyger and his prey ?
 That smile ! it spoke of yestermorn—
 I marvel not : thy race were born
 To rule the realms of earth, and ride
 Triumphant o'er the stormy tide."

Reclined within the gloomy shade,
 Albert in sweet repose is laid ;
 And Izram guards his sleeping guest,
 As eagles tend their rock-built nest :
 The waking hour, in deep debate,
 Teems with the sullen captive's fate.
 Wavers the chief, but who shall chain
 The vengeance of his princely train ?
 Or who, should Gondolph 'scape, defend
 The remnant of their scattered line,
 From raging avarice, prompt to rend
 The treasure from the secret mine ?

"Thou heard'st me tell of many a hoard,
 By foreign tyrant ne'er explored;
 Tortures would rack, and flames devour,
 While lust surmised one hidden store:
 Thou would'st not crush my race, to save
 This felon from a well-earned grave?"

While pondering yet, they hear the throng
 Of hurried footsteps wend along:
 The Mexicans in wrath surround
 A comrade, pale, disarmed, and bound.
 Few words the angry charge explain—
 "Gondolph by Nepuel's dirk is slain."
 "I slew him not: let Izram hear,
 From justice I have nought to fear.
 Few moons have waned, since in a strife
 Almarez Gondolph saved my life
 From one of his own band: he gave
 Chastisement to the vaunting slave,

And pardoned me ; yet claimed a meed,
 And swore me, at his hour of need,
 To succour him in turn : he came,
 A captive, doomed to die in shame.
 Pacing on guard before his cell,
 He saw me, and remembered well.
 He sought the boon, but had it led
 To flight or treason, ne'er had sped.
 Yielding, although I might not slay,
 I gave my dirk, and turned away :
 There lies the tyrant, grim in death,
 Leaving my fate to Izram's breath."

" Nepuel, thou should'st have shunned his sight :
 Justice hath sternly claimed her right.
 I censure, but the deed forgive—
 Confirm it friends, and bid him live."

Dispersed the train ; yet lingered nigh
 A chief, who looked on Izram's eye.

"How likest thou Nepuel's tale? what meed,

Save treason, could the Spaniard seek

From such as he? a fouler deed

Was pondered: it hath tongue to speak

A bond in treachery allied—

Infection may be spreading wide:

Some brows are glooming here: I would

Our step were free beyond the flood."

He parted, and to Albert's ear

Ízram revealed his comrade's fear.

"What meant he by the flood?"—"The wave

That rolls around this island cave."

"An island!"—"Aye, thou ne'er hadst thought

How far thy sleeping bulk was brought;

But whether o'er the waters sped,

Or deep beneath their solid bed,

I may not utter; nor betray,

No, not to thee, the secret way.

Yet must I bear thee hence. I know

These vaults enshroud some viper foe;

And Nepuel's deed reveals a clue,
 Obscurely marked on Xloti's view,
 Full clear to mine—too clear. I go,
 To look upon the prostrate foe :
 I'll bid this lamp more brightly burn,
 But slumber not till I return."

Scarce on the ear his step could die,
 A mantled figure, hovering nigh,
 Deliberate trod, and seemed to peer
 Irresolute amid the shade :
 Albert—the Christian knows no fear—
 Calmly the towering form surveyed,
 And rising, with unruffled brow,
 The challenge gave—" Say, what art thou ?"
 " Peace, Briton ; hear, but answer not :
 I know thee ; thou art firm and brave ;
 Brief be my speech—a darksome blot
 Of treason taints this fatal cave.

That royal youth,—thou lov'st him well,—
 Speed him away, and time shall tell
 I counselled wisely : let him go,
 My hand shall crush the darkling foe.
 Izram, secure in fancied power,
 Would fire the train ere ripe the hour.
 Bold boy ! how wide that soul sublime
 Had flourished in a kindlier clime !
 Nurtured like fawn to lady dear,
 He dreamed not of the savage chase,
 Nor trembled when that note of fear
 Was borne amid his cowering race.
 He gambolled with the hounds that drew
 His sportive step to grace their den,
 Curious their reeking fangs to view,
 Displayed his harmless pearls again,
 And tossed his budding antlers wide,
 In the free play of fearless pride.
 Thou seest in him a portrait fair
 Of Aztlan's hero-kings that were.

Swells in his veins the current bold
 Of many a monarch, famed of old ;
 Caziques, who battled, conquered, fell,
 Spurning the chain : in memory's cell
 He stores their deeds, with tales that dye
 The page of eastern chivalry :
 Thanks to the self-deluding foe,
 Who taught his martial fire to glow.
 Thus trained, he decks a dastard crew
 In his own spirit's ardent hue ;
 And loth were I to break the charm,
 Till he be safe from treach'rous harm.
 His fiery nature could not brook
 The stigma on his ancient line ;
 He bends no deep enquiring look
 In hollow hearts—they sound and shine,
 In seeming loyalty ; they soothe
 The princely dreams of sanguine youth,
 And speak him fair : but come the hour
 Of trial, they are winnowed bran :—

Alas! that tyranny hath power
To quell the gen'rous soul of man."

" Stranger, I deem thy counsel good;
But think'st thou of the circling flood?
Izram for me shall ne'er betray
His solemn trust, the secret way.
Wounded, I could not swim the lake"—
" Proffer the drowsy cup to take:
Dar'st thou?"—" I will."—" He seeks the cell;
Bold, honest Briton, fare thee well!
Whate'er the victim's changeful lot,
Albert and Xloti fail him not."

Izram approached with panting breath;
And clasping Albert's hand,—his own
Chill as with oozing damps of death,—
Vented his thought in smothered tone.
" Now can I thank thy martyr zeal;
I cannot hate the ghastly dead:

And gnawing shame my soul would feel

For stroke on foe defenceless sped,

In madness was Anselmo slain ;

By frenzy nerved, I rent the chain ;

It smote him, but I scarcely know

If chance or purpose dealt the blow.

How farest thou now ?"— " Alert and well,

But weary of this darksome cell ;

The beams of heaven so brightly shine,

So sweet is the unfettered air"—

" Alas ! how many captives pine,

Pent in a deeper, darker mine,

And wither in despair !

Compatriots ! agonizing theme

Of morning sigh and midnight dream !

They think upon the meads that lie

Smiling beneath their own blue sky ;

They think upon the light that plays

Over their native stream,

The evening breeze that softly strays,
And midnight's silver beam ;
And eyes of glancing love, that shone
Through blissful hours, for ever gone.
They look upon the sullen lamps
That glimmer through the foetid damp,
Inhale their pois'nous breath,
In feeble moan for freedom cry,
Stretch their discoloured limbs, and lie
Cold in the grasp of death."

His quivering lip no more could say,
So high the sad emotion swelled ;
And Albert's tear had forced its way,
And trickled to the hand he held.
" Soon will the wrathful Judge arise,
And tyrants crouch in hopeless dread,
While earth, beneath those awful eyes
Unveiled, reveals her countless dead.

Oceans of blood shall then appear,
 Appealing to Jehovah's ear
 With piercing cry. Thy country's wrong,
 The theme of record, tale, and song,
 Hath oft, in study's silent hour,
 Through my young spirit chilling crept ;
 Within my own sweet native bower,
 My veins have burned, mine eye hath wept,
 While asked my heart, in restless pain,
 ' Why doth the Lord so long refrain ?
 Why hurl not from her sanguine throne
 The impious harlot Babylon ?
 With strong right hand her pride control,
 Bidding the stern oppressor cease,
 Breathe freedom on the captive soul,
 And on the wounded spirit peace ?
 The joyous dawn approaches fast,
 Soon shall the night of woe be past,
 And earth's awakened millions sing
 Hosanna to their Saviour-King.

Yet hope not thou the wrath of man
 Shall work Jehovah's righteous plan.
 The fellest tyrant reigns within,
 The fetter of our kind is sin ;
 Nor mortal hand may break the chain,
 Nor earthly flash illumine our night ;
 Powerless the carnal sword : in vain
 Pale reason sheds her dubious light.
 When nations hear the call divine,
 Summoned to rise, and taught to shine,
 Faith is the shield, the weapon prayer,
 Eternal truth the day-star fair.
 I marked thee, while the kindling ire
 Shot from thine eye portentous fire ;
 The burning phrase that clad thy thought
 Of wrong by fierce invaders wrought :
 But powers infernal feed the glow,
 The path is sin, the issue woe.
 Deceptive meteors court thy gaze,
 Death lurks within the radiant blaze :—

As moth, allured by taper's beam,
 Fearless in narrowing circle moves,
 And plunges in the ardent stream,
 A victim to the light he loves.

" Now say, wilt thou convey once more
 Thy comrade to the distant shore,
 If such it be ? My lip could drain
 The sweet and drowsy cup again."
 " Wouldst thou confide so far ? confide
 In one whose hand thy blood hath dyed ?"
 " Aye ; wherefore not ? I trust thee well ;
 Bring me the cup : the act shall tell."
 Izram arose, but lingered still—

" Albert, I would thy race could reign,
 Careering over every hill,
 And ruling every fertile plain :
 We are too weak, too frail, too few,
 To plant our ancient palm anew :

To them I'd ope the secret mine,
And blythe my shadowy throne resign."

Albert in sadness smiled—"Alas!

Before thy gold's destructive gleam,
The virtues of our race would pass,

Like frost before the fervid beam :
Look to the neighbouring isles, and scan
The boasted righteousness of man—
These western isles—their very name
Should burn a Briton's cheek with shame—
'Trust not in man,' the Lord hath spoke ;
And there, beneath the hideous yoke,
Mid groans and blood on every side,
'Trust not in man,' is echoed wide.

Still rolls the yell of agony
Unanswered through the listening sky ;
Nor yet displays requiting time
A scourge for Britain's impious crime ;
Nor heaven-commissioned whirlwinds sweep
That noisome plague to ocean's deep.

But days of reckoning wrath shall come,
 To hurl the bolt of vengeance home,
 If mercy, o'er the billowy sea,
 Still vainly pour the warning plea."
 Izram the cup in silence brought,
 His brow was stamped with solemn thought;
 And Albert said, "I needs must gain
 One boon from thee: when passed the tide,
 Wilt thou, like faithful nurse, remain,
 Nor yield thy charge to other guide?"
 "Forsake thee? no—though limb from limb
 Were rent, I would abide by him
 Who saved me, doubly saved, and bled"—

"Enough, my friend—the draught was sweet:
 Now let me pray, ere sense be dead;

And when in waking hours we meet,
 Methinks I shall be strong, and free
 To tread the greenwood sward with thee."

CANTO III.

There comes a sound of waters dashing,

A voice from nature's midnight tomb;

And fast the silvery foam is flashing,

In flakes of light athwart the gloom;

The vampire bat his circuit wheels,

Gliding amid the thorny brake;

And where the poisonous gum congeals,

The bloated toad from covert steals,

Rousing the torpid snake.

Nor alce waves, nor towering palm,

No shrub distils the odorous balm;

But slimy venoms, trickling slow
 From clasping vines, bedew the moss ;
 Where aconite and hemlock grow,
 And dank festoons, depending low,
 The ocotochtli's pathway cross.
 No gales of heaven, but vapours damp,
 Heavily through the dark trees breathe,
 And curling round the sullen swamp,
 Their noxious eddies wreathe.
 Hurled from a rock's black beetling brow,
 The fretful waters spin below :
 Deep, deep beneath the trembling ground,
 Giddily flies the whirlpool round ;
 Nought but the light spray foaming high
 Again beholds the cheerful sky ;
 Entombed within some caverned cell,
 They roar a hollow, stern farewell.

Close on the verge of that buried tide,
 With cautious step two figures glide :

Low tones of shuddering horror thrill—

“ This is no haunt for living men ;

Sepulchral damps my spirit chill,

And nature faints, as powers of ill

Presided o’er this murky glen.”

“ Yes, I have led thee where the breath

Of all that moves is fraught with death ;

Where adders thrive, and poisons wave,

And rudely gapes the frowning grave.

When tardy morn shall glimmer here,

I’ll shew thee wilder forms of fear ;

Aye, shew thee in how small a span

May cluster every curse, but man,

The master-curse : now strain thy sight,

Pierce the foul mist, and mark the sky,

A moment :—see the fitful light

Flashing its blood-red column high :

Volcanic fires : ’tis sweet to gaze

At midnight on their lurid blaze,

And here from sullen slumber rouse
 The tribes of death's dark treasure-house.
 Thou'lt chide me now"—"I'll rather weep,
 Powerless to heal."—"But prompt to soothe,
 Thou voice of hope, and soul of truth!
 Mark those cold waves with rapid sweep,
 In darkness born, to darkness leap,
 Yet glimmer as they go, in light
 That half illumines this dreary night.
 Hurried like them in shrouding gloom,
 From rayless birth to joyless doom,
 If Izram's soul one moment shine
 In its fell course, that gleam is thine.
 Yet wherefore link thy fate to one
 By Heaven disowned, by man undone?
 Upholding whom thou canst not save,
 Caught in the whirl, to share his grave."

" 'Twere but a dastard part to leave
 My shipmate, when the billows heave

In stormy swell—I cannot fear,
 Though man forsake the Lord is near.
 Think'st thou Iberian foes can thread
 The lab'rinth of our winding tread ?
 “ Unaided ? no—but who may scan
 The guileful perfidy of man ?
 Xloti will loose the prisoned wave,
 To deluge yonder island cave,
 Stifling the wasps within their nest ;
 But some perchance have winged their way.”
 “ And could'st thou give such foul behest,
 The faithful with the false to slay ?”
 “ No 'hest of mine : from age to age,
 Caziques their plighted oath engage,
 Ere robber hand or eye profane
 Those consecrated wrecks, to drain
 The circling lake, and bid the flood
 With sweeping gush the caverns brim ;
 Xloti is born of regal blood,
 The stern achievement rests with him,

If such our need : the subject band,
 Sworn vassals, bow to my command.
 Summoned by me to upper air,
 Treason alone durst linger there,
 Unconscious of the secret doom
 That steals upon her mystic tomb :
 The skill to flood that vaulted stone
 In Xloti's breast and mine, alone,
 Is sealed. Behold yon sickly gleam,
 Precursor of the ruddy beam :
 Eastward it struggles : slow expires
 The radiance of those earth-born fires.
 Morn will relume, with callous smile,
 The paths of peril, woe, and toil,
 Reckless, on many an eye-ball dance,
 That sickens at her flaunting glance."

Swathed in a grey mysterious light,
 Now shews the rock its frowning height ;

Precipitous, wild, rude, and bare,
 No softening verdure freshens there.
 Deep chasms indent the rugged side,
 Each stern black fissure gaping wide;
 Projecting crags would fain delay
 The cataract in its foaming way,
 But fast the broken waters gush,
 And to their secret dwelling rush.
 As rolls the heavy mist apart,
 With transient blink the sun-beams dart,
 Where on the tall rock's jagged steep
 The swart and yellow lichens creep;
 Stirred by the morning's breath, they fall
 Like pennons on a ruined wall.
 Far westward smiles the ruddy glow,
 On mountain summits capped with snow,
 That, melting in the distant sky,
 Expand a cloudy ridge on high:
 But ever-glooming shades repel
 The day-beam from that sombre dell.

Yet welcome was the rude repose ;
A dark retreat from darker foes.

Albert, in slumber wrapped, was borne
Forth from the cave at early morn ;
And woke in timely hour, to wrest
A dagger aimed at Izram's breast,
By treach'rous hand : the rebel, bound,

Beneath the weapon's point displayed
The wily snares encircling round

His youthful leader, long betrayed.
Then Xloti came ; his lightning thrust
Stretched the assassin mute in dust ;
He tempered with resistless plea

The fiery scorn of Izram's soul,
Winning the haughty chief to flee,

Ere the full-freighted cloud should roll
On Albert, that o'erwhelming tide
Which he had braved in dauntless pride.

In hunter's simplest weed arrayed,
Yet deeply armed with tube and blade,
They sallied, where the mock-bird sung
Her sweetest lay, and squirrels sprung
In playful leap: before them glowed
Soft plumage of a thousand dyes,
Where from their flower-enamelled road
Abrupt the floating pinions rise,
And perch amid the deepening green,
In glorious shapes of silver sheen,
Of regal purple, blushing red,
Each tint o'er nature's pallet spread.
Lizards and fangless snakes display
Their agile forms in vestment gay;
The wild-bee, as he wends along,
Trills to the rose his sylvan song;
Twining in lofty arches high,
Blend cedar, palm, and ebony;
Gigantic aloes here unfold
At every joint their knots of gold;

There, the tall tulip-tree bestuds
 Her branching arms with gem-like buds;
 And not a charm to Flora given
 But smiles beneath that azure heaven.
 Cereus,—hesperus of flowers,—
 Enamoured of the softer hours,
 Lies coiled within her downy cell,
 In beauty's proudest blaze to swell,
 When shoots the fire-fly's fairy gleam;
 The sable brow of night to wreath
 In fragrance day could never breathe,
 Then die before the morning's beam.

 In winding course, a crystal rill
 Steals from beneath the rising hill,
 Freshening a sunny bank, arrayed
 In emerald moss and infant blade.
 There, like a drift of stainless snow,
 Basks the white stag, a noble aim;

But Izram hath not bent his bow,

While faintly, indistinct, and low;

The murmuring accents came.

"I shorten not thy fleeting span,

Poor native fool! thou fear'st not man;

Because thou know'st him not—'twere his

With murderous skill to mar thy bliss,

To dye thy silken vest with blood,

And speed thee plaining through the wood,

I cannot now."—From light repose

Startled, that beautiful creature rose;

A moment gazed with wondering eye,

Bearing his graceful antlers high,

Then gambolling, in wanton glee,

Sprung o'er the stream, and turned to flee.

Peering above his rapid path,

The monkey tribe his flight survey,

Chattering declare their idle wrath,

And shake the bough and bend the spray;

Hurling the juicy missile far,
 In all the rage of pigmy war;
 While parrots stoop, with curious pry,
 The ebon beak and piercing eye,
 Betraying mid their leafy screen,
 Bedropt with gold, a livelier green :
 And rainbow pinions, fluttering round,
 Swell the gay strife with rustling sound.

The closing eye viewed Albert laid
 Beneath a low palmetto's shade,
 Whose feathery branches, wooed to spread
 On canes, afford a verdant shed.
 Izram with leech's care unbound,
 And gently dressed the healing wound.
 Cheerly he spoke, his cheek the while
 Half brightened to a passing smile,
 "Thanks to the Christian's God are due;
 Our hasty flight thou dost not rue.

I'll bring thee cooling pulps, and keep
 A soldier's watch, while thou shalt sleep;
 Then stretch my limbs in turn, and try
 How mates despair with misery."

" Woe, Izram, is a bitter root,
 Yet formed to bear immortal fruit;
 A harrow in th' Almighty hand,
 To crush and turn the stubborn land.
 The reeds have broke and pierced thy breast,

Oh make the Rock thy fortress now!
 And thou shalt win a sweeter rest

Than broods upon the monarch's brow.
 The warning to thy soul is sent,
 These awful scourges cry ' Repent!'
 Bend but a stedfast gaze within,
 Scan the permitted reign of sin,
 List to the righteous law, whose breath
 Guerdone each evil thought with death,

—A conscious death that cannot die,
 The gnawings of eternity,—
 Then on the cross thy Saviour see,
 Bearing the wrath divine for thee,
 And risen with all-prevailing love
 To plead thy desperate cause above ;
 While gently, in thine inmost ear,
 The Spirit's voice invites thee near.
 The foe, to bar that winning sound,
 Hemmed thee with lofty bulwarks round ;
 He bade thy fiery passions bring
 Rebellious bands to dare thy King ;
 Ambition, love, revenge, and pride,
 Armed at his beck, a host supplied :
 Entrenched, thy soul disdainful trod,
 Gloried in shame, and scorned its God.
 A Father's hand in pity burst
 Through the black fence of powers accurst ;
 Plucked from the sheltering battlement,
 To cast thee on the stormy wild,

And there the gracious summons sent

Again salutes His wayward child;

Tells thee, my brother-worm, by me,

That heaven hath oped before thy tread

Its golden gates, and Jesus spread

The banquet of His love for thee."

Still shading his averted face,

The youth in pensive silence stood;

Then starting, with disordered pace,

Plunged deep within the thickest wood;

While, faith o'ermastering cold despair,

Albert pursued the theme in prayer.

When woke the bird her matin song,

The pilgrims rose to wend along,

And wilder grew the path, and chill

The evening breeze from moor and hill;

Till midnight vapours, cold and damp,

Enwrapped them in the pois'nous swamp:

Nor might they close the heedful eye
Beneath its humid canopy.

When to that gloomy scene the ray
Had lent its scanty share of day,
Nor longer could the rattlesnake
Lie veiled within the shadowy brake,
But the fierce eye-beam sternly told
Where lay involved his deadly fold,
And slinking back from human ken
The she-wolf sought her secret den,
The weary travellers softly trod
Over the moist and slimy sod,
Wary and slow, for still their feet
Verged on the viper's dank retreat,
Above, Arachne's giant brood
Spun their tough venom through the wood,
So firm, that captive birds in vain
Essayed to rive the gluey chain :

Clenched in the reptile's closing grasp,
 The helpless victims writhe and gasp,
 And soon beneath its gory fangs,
 Flutter in death's convulsive pangs.
 Where the rude cliffs projecting hung,
 Forth in her pride the eagle sprung;
 And, stooping from her eyrie's height,
 With sable wing obscured the light :
 Loud thrilled her scream—with louder cry
 Grates from beneath a harsh reply ;
 And there, upon his liquid throne,
 The alligator reigns alone ;
 With reedy banner wide unfurled,
 Dread monarch of the watery world !
 Clashing his naked fangs, he rears
 His scaly bulk, and spouts the wave ;
 Beneath his glowing eye appears
 The semblance of a sulph'rous grave ;
 So smokes each fiery breath he draws
 In eddies through those iron jaws :

Basking in shoals the monsters lie,
Or plough the lake with deafening cry.

The scenery of that murky vale
Might teach the firmest heart to quail;
Yet faltered not their steps, who wound
Skirting the cloudy waters round;
For Albert, strong in faith, recalled
The fiat which to man enthralled
All nature's various tribes, and spread
On every beast his fear and dread.
What daunts him whom the Lord defends,
Numbering his every hair, and bends
The shadow of His hand, to raise
A bulwark round His servant's ways?
And Izram's pallid features wear
The reckless smile of bold despair,
As glancing on the living tide
The fierce unwieldy forms he eyed,

And muttered, " Ye are freemen still :
 Stout were the arm, and shrewd the skill,
 That dared your native reign invade,
 Or touch the ivory palisade
 Fencing your throats, though every fold,
 And every scale, were lined with gold."

Retiring from the sedgy lake,
 A steeply winding path they take,
 Toiling to gain a narrow ledge,
 Where mountain goat would pause to tread,
 So giddily the broken edge
 O'erhung a gulf's unbottomed bed.
 But firm and fearless Izram stepped,
 Guiding his comrade's course, and crept
 Within a chasm, whose narrow span
 Could ill admit the bulk of man ;
 Meet portal to an eagle's nest,
 But strange resort for human guest.

Descending now, with cautious leap,

They stood beneath an ample cave,
Whose frequent crevice, straight and deep,
Free passage to the sun-beam gave.

"Here rest we, Albert; here abide,
Till fairer chance our steps betide.

These rocky vaults may well supply
A dwelling lightsome, warm, and dry;

Though foes our wild retreat should ken,
No hostile step can near the den;

A single arm may guard the post,
Nor fail to daunt a threatful host.

The palm's broad leaf, profusely thrown,
Shall soften e'en a couch of stone;

And, westward, robed in cheerful green,
Thou seest an ample magazine

Of fuel, game, and wholesome root;
Sweet bev'rage, and delicious fruit:

Peer through the narrow chink, and say,
How lik'st thou yonder fair display?"

It was a magic scene; the eye
Gazed from a cliff abrupt and high :
Below, a velvet plain was spread,
Where buffalo and roe-buck fed ;
Beyond, a spicy forest rose,
And calmly flowed a limpid stream,
While far remote, in deep repose,
Gigantic mountains caught the beam,
Their summits wrapped in snowy shroud,
Towering above the fleecy cloud.
With sparkling eye and bounding breast,
Albert exclaimed, " Be this our rest !
Here, in this sweet secluded cell,
The Lord may smile, and peace shall dwell."

From short repast, and light repose,
Ere stooped the western sun, they rose,
And to their lofty eyrie bore,
With patient toil, the evening store.

Again at early morn they rove
 The sloping plain and shady grove,
 Bear in the cocoa's ample shell
 Streams that from crystal fountains well ;
 Izram with nice discernment taps
 The balmy tree for luscious saps ;
 The magney, vegetable mine,
 Yields them her sweet cassavi bread,
 Pours from her veins the gen'rous wine,
 Curtains the wall and strews the bed ;
 The gaze enchants, the need supplies,
 Weeps nectar, breathes perfume, and dies,
 Where verdant scales reflect the beam,
 Lurks cherrimoya's honied cream ;
 And every sweet that nature gave,
 Lay hoarded in that craggy cave.
 Oft as the hunter's craft they plied,
 Beneath their bow the quarry died ;
 And memory would her cells explore,
 For touching theme, and classic lore.

But lore nor sylvan sport control;
The deepening gloom of Izram's soul;
Though Albert wrought with sacred skill
The burden from his mind to win,
And oft repulsed, unwearied still,
Would probe the festering wound within.

Izram had stripped from feathered prey
Their plumes of azure, gold, and jet,
And listless as at eve he lay,
Entwined a native coronet;
Gazed for a while with musing eye,
And flung the beauteous bauble by.
Albert with silent heed beheld
The smothered pang that wildly swelled;
Then spoke, in accent sad and low,
"Would it were mine to soothe thy woe!
There heaves within that aching breast
A stormy sea that cannot rest;

Nor will its wearying tempest cease,
Till thou shalt list the word of peace."

"Never! no word of peace can come
Within my spirit's darkened home.
I chide thee not, for well I know
From purest love thy teachings flow;
The heavenly theme to thee is dear,
To me 'tis bitterness and fear;
So lost am I, the widest grace
Could never Izram's soul embrace."

"Strange, that a honey-drop should fall
On thy distempered lip as gall!
Canst thou, a worm, a finite thing,
Outreach the grace of heaven's high King?
I know thy spirit fierce and wild,
I know thy hand by blood defiled,
By headlong passions hurried still
To work each demon's deadly will;

I know it all : and yet thine eye
 Lours with unuttered mystery :
 Deep in thy bosom's inmost fold
 There lurks some secret, yet untold."
 " A serpent nest : I will not shew
 That gorgon to thy shrinking view.
 Go, search through flame, through earth's firm core
 Through depths of ocean, heights of air,
 The everlasting gulf explore,
 Thou canst not with one wrath-drop more
 Crown the full cup of my despair,
 Nor compass with thy labouring thought
 The crimes this fearless heart hath wrought."
 " Thy words appal me not : I bring
 The proffer of a healing spring ;
 Some lost as thee have blest the flood,
 Cleansed from all sin by Jesus' blood.
 Canst thou Jehovah's word recal,
 Or pass beyond that boundless ALL ?

Though lightnings pierce, and thunders roll,
 And mountain billows whelm thy soul,
 Though round thee earth her barriers spread,
 And ocean weeds enwrap thy head,
 Lulled by His voice, the storm shall cease,
 His gentle accents whisper, peace."

On Izram's sullen glance was borne
 A dart of anguish, blent with scorn;
 It curled his lip of livid hue :—
 " And blooms there peace for Judas too ?
 To his own place he went—repair
 With tidings of deliverance there :
 There, in thy fond security,
 Preach peace to him—but none to me :
 Me, the apostate ; me, who sold
 The faith, but not for earth-born gold ;
 A deeper barter, paid too well
 In the devouring coin of hell.

—I marvel at thy steadfast brow,—

Its sudden flush hath passed away—

I tell thee I was blest as thou,

Beneath the gospel ray :

Not clouded with the pagan rite

Of those whose fairest noon is night,

But pure and holy as the blaze,

When first, to the Redeemer's praise,

On Beth'hem's plain the song began,

While seraphs hymned, in rapturous lays,

Glory to God, and peace to man.

The name of Jesus once could calm

Each stormy fiend that racked my breast,

Breathe o'er my soul ambrosial balm,

And bathe my brow in holiest rest.

Oh! many a day I taught His name

To lisping childhood, faltering eld ;

And prayer arose like hallowed flame,

And lays of sweet devotion swelled.

—I spurned Him—Foolish youth forbear ;

Thou shalt not weep, or not for me ;

It maddens more my wild despair,

Those kindly-trickling drops to see.

Still flow they ? would thou hadst not wrung

This secret from my blistering tongue !

Check, womanish, thy tears, for shame—

Or weep ; for thou hast wakened mine :

I little thought the withering flame

Could mingle thus with liquid brine—

I little thought a tear should stain

This crime-emboldened cheek again.”

He flung him on his leafy bed,

With arms enfolded o'er his head,

And Albert inly joyed to view

The softening and unwonted dew.

Whispering he spoke—“ I half had guessed

The secret of my brother's breast,

But could not deem thy land was graced

With gospel glories undebased.

Poor prodigal ! thy spirit rouse,
 Come to thy Father's open house :
 He longs for thee : behold, His care
 The ring, the robe, the feast prepare.
 Izram—my friend—return, and prove,
 The sweets of everlasting love."

" Thou hast a syren note—I long,
 Yet dread to list that witching song
 Of pardon and of hope. Now hear
 My tale of sorrow, shame, and fear :
 Afar I fling the dark disguise,
 And give the monster to thine eyes.

" Marauding o'er the boundless waves,
 Wandered a band of pirate slaves ;
 Spain from her dungeons poured the crew,
 To fill the widening gaps anew ;
 For, crushed and blighted, day by day,
 Our native millions pined away ;

And Heaven the plenteous cup of wrath
Poured freely on the murderers' path,
Bidding their wasted hosts expire,
In famine, surfeit, flood, and fire.
Long ere the western shore they gain,
 This felon freight rebellious rose,
The galley seized, and roved the main,
 Plunder their word, the world their foes.
A vessel crossed the robbers' way,
They chased and grasped the helpless prey.

“There sighed, amid the captive band,
 A wanderer from the clime of Tell,
Hills of the Switzer, glorious land,
 Where freedom's wildest carols swell,
While on the Alp's majestic brow
She wreathes her diadem of snow.
Spurning the chain that sought to bind
His spotless faith, his lofty mind,

The noble exile, high in birth,
Ennobled more by priceless worth,
His home forsook, and fondly smiled
Upon his only, beauteous, child,
Deeming in other climes to meet
A calmer rest for Minna's feet.
Ere yet the work of plunder ceased,
The billows roared, the gale increased,
And, dashed upon our northern coast,
The corsair crew their galley lost;
'Scaping with life, a naked band,
The weary remnant reached the land.

“ Near those wild waters dwelt a tribe,
Whom force nor quelled nor gift could bribe;
Famed like their sires for bold emprise,
The stern and tameless Otomies:
Unfettered in their mountain reign,
Their battle-cry was—‘ Woe to Spain !’

And those dark pirates 'scaped the flood,
 To sate the vengeful soil with blood.
 Amid the pile of slaughter flung,
 The Switzer died ; but Minna clung,
 Frantic with fear, to one who spread
 His target o'er her cowering head,
 And with a chief's control repressed
 The rage of many a stormy breast.
 Borne to his rocky home, she dwelt,
 Honoured and blest, that warrior's bride,
 And bade his rugged nature melt,
 To gentler sympathies allied.
 Wound in the soft and silken tie
 Of woman's hallowed witchery,
 —The spell that sternest bosom moves—
 He loved, as savage rarely loves.

“ She bore a daughter ; one whose face
 Bespoke the father's tawny race ;

But oh, the pearls that dwelt within
 That soul of Minna's gentle kin !
 The heart of love, capacious mind ;
 The feelings generous, soft, refined ;
 The lamp of piety, that glowed
 So brightly in its sweet abode !
 My mother !"—and the accents gasped,
 Half stifled by the sobs that rise,
 While on his burning temples clasped,
 His hands conceal his streaming eyes :—
 " Oh mother, mother ! friend and guide,
 Why left the parricide thy side !

" That bud of beauty scarce was blown,
 When Minna sought her Saviour's throne.
 Reft of his love, the widowed chief
 His tribe forsook in restless grief ;
 From place to place the pilgrims roam,
 And reach at length Chiapa's plain ;

Where, in my father's peaceful home,
 A welcome and repose they gain.
 His generous soul with pain surveyed
 The dying sire, and loved the maid ;
 Unknown, save to himself, the race ;
 A mixture had been deemed disgrace :
 Iberian taint perchance surmised ;—
 My noble sire the doubt despised :
 Eagles with eagle mates may wed,
 Though in a distant mountain bred ;
 And Alpine eagles soar as high
 As liberty can glance her eye.
 If love of freedom, patriot scorn,
 Blent with the vital stream, be borne
 From age to age, that stern disdain
 Full well might bound in Izram's vein.
 My infant ear hath drank the tale
 Of frozen height, and sunny vale,
 Where hearts who spurned oppression's pride
 In living phalanx stemmed the tide,

And fiercely dashed the surging foam
 Back to the startled tyrant's home ;
 Or, battling for the gospel word,
 Pursued the flash of Zuing's sword.
 Huitzla taught my heart to swell,
 When lisped my tongue the name of Tell ;
 My sire, whose blood its current drew
 From high Tezeuco's regal race,
 Oft to my spirit's eager view,
 With rival touch, a scene would trace
 Of native glories, meet to flame
 Beside Helvetia's proudest name.
 —They fanned a blaze with playful breath
 To wrap that mingled line in death.

“ Hast thou ne'er marked, my lip and cheek
 No Indian ancestry bespeak ?
 'Twas Minna stamped my brow too fair,
 And softened to its curl my hair :

Oft while these locks profusely spread,
 My parents stroked the urchin's head,
 And cried, with looks of laughing love,
 Their Izram would a tell-tale prove.
 O days of childhood, sweet ye shone;
 Why died I not ere ye were gone!

“ When ten short circling years were fled,
 We saw Nopatzlin droop and fade;
 Weeping we kneeled around the bed,
 Where the expiring saint was laid:
 Won to receive the living word,
 Long had he loved and served the Lord.
 Through the dim shadowy vale of death,
 His God a lamp and staff supplied;
 And lauding him with feeble breath,
 Joyous in conquering faith he died.
 His was the mild untroubled breast,
 In its own cloudless sunshine blest;

Like meadow rill that calmly glides
Beyond the reign of changeful tides.
Mine was the mountain spring, that, led
Meandering through its rocky bed,
Waits but a sudden swell to sweep
With headlong torrent down the steep.

“ On rainbow wings the seasons flew ;
 I rose beneath a mother's eye,
Answering its beam, with mirror true,
 As the still lake reflects the sky ;
Resplendent in a borrowed light ;
As yet unruffled, pure, and bright ;
That was my day of life—the rest
Is midnight in my stormy breast.
My boyish gaze would oft explore
The symbols of our ancient lore,
And nobles marked their young Cazique,
 As, bending o'er the mystic scroll,
With starting tear and burning cheek,
 The rising vengeance swelled my soul ;

And subtly worked the specious leaven,
 Till earth had wiled my heart from heaven.
 Huitzla saw how, many a day,
 From her fond side I stole away,
 Breathing my soul in secret vows,
 And blazing at my country's wrong,
 Mingled with men who loved to rouse
 The latent spark by tale and song ;
 Even while I conned the holy word,
 My spirit pined for Gideon's sword,
 Languished to rend the groaning prey,
 From worse than Egypt's tyrant sway :
 Still on my lip persuasion hung,
 To shame the old and fire the young ;
 Deeply we quaffed the daring theme,
 And revelled in a glorious dream.

" I told thee how Anselmo sought,
 With serpent wile, our peaceful vale ;
 But spare my soul the maddening thought,
 The horrors of the tale !

When at my feet Huitzla lay,
 And rising placed in dark array
 The apostate's crime and doom,
 Shewing the awful paths that lead
 Through evil wish to sinful deed,
 Thence to a hopeless tomb;
 She warnéd me of the snare, the stain,
 She pointed to her widowed bower,
 The scene of many a tranquil hour,
 But never more to smile—in vain :
 I wavered, but ambition spoke,
 Drowned was the plaintive plea—I broke
 Impetuous from her wild embrace ;
 Flung far the Saviour's gentle yoke,
 And joined the demon race.

With snares beset, by sin subdued——
 My heart grows sick, I cannot tell
 How, step by step, my foot pursued
 The beaten path that leads to hell ;

How leisurely the tempter stole,
 Unnoticed, from my heedless soul,
 Her treasure of celestial joys,
 And filled the chasm with airy toys.
 In panoply of pride secure,
 Well could I spurn the sensual lure;
 Abashed before my scornful eye,
 Vice veiled her foul deformity:
 'Twas in my bosom triumphed sin,
 A saint without, a fiend within,
 While still, in darkening thought, I sate
 My wild revenge, and heath'nish hate.
 And when the Lord, with warning breath,
 Whispered to shun eternal death,
 I turned me from the voice, to prove
 That feverish dream of mortal love.
 Quenched by my fierce and stubborn will,
 Opposed and grieved, the Spirit flies,
 And leaves the bartered slave of ill
 To perish in his own device.

Though Satan urged a rightful claim,
Fain had I borne the Christian name,
To soothe my soul; but I was pent
Amid the cowed crew, who bent
A jealous gaze—I could not guile
My reason with the flimsy wile
Of fabling Rome. Anselmo's eye
Was veiled in prudent policy;
He deemed that in the lonely hour
I bowed before some idol power,
And questioned not: his pedant store
Was swelled with tomes of guileful lore,
And these I rifled, day by day,
Forgot to fear, and ceased to pray.
While thus I fed the widening blot
Of hate and passion, scorn and pride,
Neglected in her lonely cot,
My mother wept, and pined, and died.
Then earth and heaven arose to plead
For vengeance on the parricide;

Red came the death-bolt's searching glare,
 Conscience awakened roused despair,
 Writhing I rather raged than mourned,
 My heart in fierce resentment burned;
 And then the maddening cup I quaffed,
 For Lethe lurked within the draught.
 Spurning against the chastening rod,
 I chose my country for a god,
 Pledged the wild oath, no other name,
 My zeal should move, my care should claim.
 I asked but vengeance,—let it come
 From angel's bower or demon's home—
 Who gave revenge should bear away
 My spirit his affianced prey;
 Anselmo's murder sealed the vow,—
 And darest thou speak of mercy now?"

"Mercy, that overtops the height
 Of yonder vaulted azure light:

Mercy, that sets the hated sin

Far from the soul as east from west,

And leads the guilty wanderer in,

A pardoned and admitted guest :

That saving power thou hast not known,

Unbroken was the heart of stone ;

Unmeet the glorious work to scan,

Thy teacher was not God, but man.

Soon as arose the troublous swell,

Thy sand-built shed in ruins fell.

Far from the Lord thy step hath strayed ;

Thou hast rebelled, blasphemed, denied

Thy Saviour-King, but he hath prayed,

And for the foul offender died."

" Oh, not for me !"—" Nay, do not spurn

His grace—Who sent me o'er the main,

To bid thee live, to bid thee turn,

To save thee from a darker stain,

And armed me with a secret power

To quell thee in thy wildest hour?"

" 'Tis wondrous : oft, when thou hast spoke,
 Gleams of unearthly radiance broke
 Across my spirit's gloomy night ;
 Glimmers of faint and distant light,
 To shew th' appalling chaos there,
 And fade again in black despair.
 Like drowning wretch, with desperate twine,
 Long have I linked my heart to thine ;
 Still brooding o'er the coming day,
 When thou wilt soar to bliss divine,
 And I must sink, the demon's prey.
 'Twas that on thy mild spirit shone,
 The light of days for ever gone ;
 To me thou wert an airy voice,
 A phantom shape, of buried joys,
 Too holy and too pure to rest
 Again in this polluted breast.
 Yet stout rebellion, linked with pride,
 The tie disowned, the claim denied.

Deep in the iron net ensnared,

I fain would deem our common wrong

My life preserved, and peril shared,

Had wove a chain so bright and strong.

And while my soul, o'erawed by thine,

Faltered in every fell design,

Still writhing in th' accursed yoke,

What pangs thy faithful speech awoke !

Nor wine could drown, nor madness quell,

That foretaste of my future hell."

" Blessed be the Lord, whose watchful care

Hath laid thy festering bosom bare !

He never made a vain appeal,

Nor searched the wound He would not heal.

The stroke is mercy ; lie thou still

Beneath His hand, and wait his will.

Pray—he will send the quickening shower ;

Believe—and thou shalt know his power."

" I may not pray ; I would not bow

My pride, and He hath left me now.

Too long I waged the frantic strife—

What murderer holds eternal life?"

"As murderer, none: but God can lave

To fleecy white that crimson glow,

And scarlet from the blanching wave

Emerges pure as drifted snow;

Be thou of sinners first and chief,

Thy darkest crime were unbelief."

To nurse the budding hope, to calm

The stormy throb, and drop the balm

Of promise on the smarting wound,

Was patient Albert's daily care;

And angel guards, encamping round,

The heaven-taught labour share.

Exulting fiends, whose eager eyes

Long glared upon their passive prize,

Repulsed by that celestial band,

In foaming rage expectant stand,

And firmly grasp the loosening chain :—
 Speed to your dens, ye race accursed ;
 The Lord hath spoke, the fetters burst.

Your victim lives again :
 And o'er the shattered links of hell
 Seraphic tones triumphant swell.

The youths had plied their woodland skill,
 In winding dell and slanting hill ;
 And now, beneath the forest shade,
 While brightly glowed the western sky,
 Izram the beauteous scene surveyed,
 With placid smile and dewy eye.
 “ Mark how the dazzling glories rest
 On Andes' steep and frozen brow ;
 Ev'n thus, upon my sterner breast,
 Albert, the ray is beaming now.
 That word of comfort haunts me still,
 ‘ Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst’——‘ I WILL.’

Though measureless the leprous taint,
 Though faith be weak, and hope be faint,
 He can—He will—Let rocks remove,

And yonder mountains melt in clay,
 The promise of redeeming love

Shall never, never pass away.

In vain my prostrate soul would trace

This miracle of boundless grace ;

But THOU who bid'st that soul believe,

Jesus, thy ransomed foe receive !

Here, in this heart of yielding stone,

Engrave thy law, and fix thy throne."

A joy too full for speech or thought

In Albert's swelling bosom wrought—

Know'st thou the joy of him, whose breath

With pleadings faith alone can give,

Hath won a soul from ways of death,

To seek the narrow path and live ?

Hapless and strange thy doubtful lot;

O Christian! if thou know'st it not;

While sinners throng thy daily road,

And death's rude billow, rolling deep,

Down to perdition's fell abode

Bears them with hourly sweep.

Hast thou ne'er led a pondering eye

To that dread word, ETERNITY?

Hath ne'er thy lip essayed to tell

The saving strength of Jesus' name,

Nor questioned if a soul could dwell

In whirlpools of devouring flame?

Go mark the stately bird, betrayed

To scoffing foes; her idiot head

Shrouded within the narrow shade,

She hears the hunters' threatening tread,

Yet deems her spreading bulk unseen,

If but a leaf her vision screen,

Nor shrinks while busy hands prepare

The piercing dart, or coiling snare.

Impressive type of fools, who close
The mental eye in false repose ;
And, starting, wake to writhe in vain,
Bound in an everlasting chain.

CANTO IV.

SWEET was the morning's tint that gave
Its first blush to the rugged cave ;
Sweet was the quivering beam that glowed,
 Tempered by deep, o'erarching shades,
Along the hunters' noon-day road,
 Winding amid the flowery glades ;
And sweet the parting ray, that fell
Lengthening within their simple cell.
Where'er they rove, where'er they rest,
 Hovers unseen the stainless dove,
And faith in either tranquil breast
 Feeds the pure flame of hope and love.
Brightly through life's dark vista given,
Shone on their view the courts of heaven ;

While day by day the brothers share
 Inspiring converse, praise, and prayer—
 Balm of the weary pilgrim's woe,
 Dawn of celestial bliss below,
 When, darkling yet awakened, man
 Ponders redemption's glorious plan,
 And to a kindred heart makes known
 The labouring thought that swells his own,
 Of mercies countless, measureless,
 Immortal as the soul they bless!
 But thorns bestrew the path divine,
 And sevenfold flames the gold refine;
 Sealed is the heir with scourging love,
 Chastened below to reign above.

There came a note at eventide

Of trampling hoofs that swiftly trod;
 For, herding close, the wild deer hied
 Impetuous o'er the dewy sod.

Roused from their nests, the eagles go,
With scream of menace floating low,
And summon many a wing to rise
Fluttering beneath the darkened skies.
Izram hath quenched the flaming torch,
And fixed within the narrow porch
A ponderous stone—through slender chink
The crescent shoots her feeble blink,
While slow her infant glories die,
Remotely in the western sky.
Sinks the harsh sound, the tumults cease,
Night's gentle brow is wrapped in peace;
And Albert speaks—"Some beast of prey
Holds through the woods unwonted way."
"No step but man's would waken here
Such clamorous notes of rage and fear:
Ambushed perchance in yonder glen,
The foe hath marked this secret den,
And scans, beneath the glooming night,
Our fortress in the rocky height."

"What counsel then?"—"With augur's care
 Observe each wing that cleaves the air;
 Note if the timid herd shall trace
 Their wonted path with heedless pace;
 Till then, within our watch-tower pent,
 Lurk we secure, and bide th' event.
 Our ample hoard"—with whizzing sound
 An arrow passed, and smote the ground.
 Joyous he seized the shaft: "How true,
 Ev'n through the shade, thy greeting flew,
 Brave Xloti! O for dawning light,
 To give this hieroglyph to sight!
 Cheer thee, my friend: the Lord hath set
 A guard above the tangling net."
 "What mean'st thou?"—"On this headless dart
 Xloti hath graved, with native art,
 Some warning word of treacherous foe
 Embosomed in the vale below:
 Else had his step securely trod
 The inlet of our wild abode.

The Lord, this bold device who blest,
 Will guard the hours of needful rest :
 Undoubting on thy couch recline ;
 Peace to thy soul, and grace to mine !”

Soft rose the morning's welcome rays,
 That gave the shaft to Izram's gaze.
 With swelling heart the lines he eyed—
 “ Gone are the wrecks of Aztlan's pride !
 And many a perjured spirit gone
 Unsheltered to the judgment throne.
 Not mine the deed ; but oh, how well,
 How long I wrought the craft of hell !
 How full thy ravening flame I fed,
 Unhallowed wrath ! and lured the tread
 Of brother men, to wander far
 Beneath ambition's baleful star.
 Rebellion !—’twas the crime that hurled
 Seraphs from bliss, and wrecked the world.

The tyrant chain, the iron rod,
 Commissioned scourges, sent of God,
 Proclaim, 'Repent!' but I have wrung
 To blasphemy that awful word,
 Translating to a demon tongue
 The message of the Lord."
 In silent agony he strode,
 Crossed and re-crossed the dim abode,
 Smote his damp brow, and pausing stood—
 "How deep the thrilling voice of blood!
 Unmarked 'mid passion's maddening swell,
 How sternly rolls the ruthless knell
 O'er the still spirit, pealing slow
 Its fiat of eternal woe!"

"A louder plea, resounding high
 Through mercy's portal, drowns the cry:
 Gushed on the cross a richer vein,
 To blot the record, purge the stain:

By faith descried, received in prayer,

Confess thy costly ransom there.

He bore thy sin, and who shall roll

That burden back upon thy soul?

Resplendent Sun of righteousness,

Omnipotent to save and bless,

Mistrustful earth a while may shroud

Her vision in her own dark cloud,

But far above our wayward skill,

Beacon of hope! thou shinest still.

That glorious orb is blazing yet,

It will not wane, it cannot set."

Izram, with calm but saddened look

Again the pictured greeting took:

It told of Spanish bands, who, taught

By Nepuel's tale, the cavern sought;

But Xloti, undiscovered, sped

The billows to its secret bed:

In torturing pangs the traitor died,
Beneath the rage of baffled pride,
That judged his fabling lip had told
A dream, to mock their thirst of gold.
But some unhappy clue he gave
Had led them to this mountain cave,
Where, as they deemed, an ample band
Was marshalled under Izram's hand.
Less would the cautious foemen dare
By open force than secret snare;
And Xloti warned, "Whene'er I fly
A purple shaft, the storm is nigh."

Wheeling their round unbroken flight,
Glide the fair day, and tranquil night;
Far distant roamed the peaceful deer,
The jealous eagle hovered near,
Guarding her brood : within the cell
Watched the alternate sentinel,

Piled close the stony fence, and bent
The ear, in silent heed intent ;
Waiting a sovereign Master's will,
In deep submission, calm and still,
A second week had scanty passed,
The evening beam, with kind farewell,
A lingering line of glory cast
Athwart the captive's leagured cell ;
They gazed upon the mellowing glow
That deepened in the blushing sky ;
When, murmuring from the plain below,
Arose a melting melody.
Slowly across the velvet sod
A form of female beauty trod ;
She shone in soft majestic grace,
Like maiden of Iberian race ;
Sparkled beneath the filmy veil
A dazzling eye ; her cheek was pale,
Till Albert's meeting glance revealed
Their secret stand ; then, blushing red,

Her bending features half concealed,

Her hand upon the lute she spread.

The Briton turned an anxious eye

On Izram: flushing quick and high,

Crimsoned his very brow; his breath

Gasped as beneath the arm of death:

Shuddering, an upward look he gave,

Then paced with faltering step the cave;

While richly o'er the plain beneath

The notes their deep enchantment breathe,

And mock-birds from the quivering spray

With mimic cadence swelled the lay,

That called the youth's light tread, to press

The flowery woodland's soft recess,—

“ While bears the vestal queen of night

Her lamp through heaven's triumphal arch,

And glittering guards, in armour bright,

Observant trace their sovereign's march,

And silence walks the shadowy groves,

And mute is every sigh but love's;

Whose stealing footstep will not wake
 A rustle o'er the hum-bird's nest,
 Nor fright, amid the spangled brake,
 The fire-fly from his leafy rest."

'Twas nature's lullaby; the note
 Scarce o'er a murmuring whisper rose;
 Dubious a while it seemed to float,
 Then faltered to a dying close:
 And soft o'er Izram's melting soul
 With wonted spell the witchery stole,
 As, pausing on his breathless tread,
 Drooped the long lash, and bending head.
 But starting soon in conscious shame,
 Brightly the mantling crimson came,
 And flashed his eye, while glancing round
 Firmly he paced the cavern's bound.
 "Hear'st thou the lay? a goodly net
 For truant wing by fowler set!

That syren tone hath bade me break
 Through iron fence, and stormy lake,
 Through filial love, and faith divine,
 All but the idol's fatal shrine,
 My country's cause—How wildly soft
 The liquid poison steals aloft—
 Bane of my soul ! and dare it come
 Polluting thus our hallowed home ?
 Again the wildering accents swell—
 Speak, Albert ; burst the tempter's spell ;
 I may not list—a thousand ties
 Press on my heart—O Lord, arise !
 Arm me with strengthening grace within,
 Pierce me with every shaft but sin !
 “ There spoke the Christian : faith and prayer
 Can crush satanic links in air.
 The strain has paused ” — “ No more 'twill float,
 I know the last long closing note.
 The songstress lingers yet—I'll try
 To shame her hence.” Then firm and high

He spoke, with cool, deliberate word—
 “ Leila, where lurks thy wedded lord ?
 Plies he the huntsman’s craft, to win
 The quarry with so stale a gin ?
 And thou, combined with evil men,
 Darest thou explore yon fearful glen,
 Dreadless of Him whose righteous breath
 Can quench th’ unhallowed wile in death ?”
 “ Izram, thy Leila comes”——“ Away !
 Hath woman shame so light a sway ?
 Pure as the wreath on Andes’ brow
 I thought thee once, or never vow
 Had linked my soul to thee—’twas thine
 To rend the chain, and be it mine
 To warn thee that a gulf of woe
 Flames for the faithless wife below.
 Haste to thy spouse, ner longer roam,
 Unseemly, from a matron home.”
 “ I came to save thee, not to snare”——
 “ Thanks, lady, for thy generous care,

Needless but kind"—abrupt he left
 The winning voice, and dangerous cleft;
 Yet sad remembrance wrings his breast,
 And troublous visions break his rest,
 Till morning's opening eye revealed
 His lids in heavy slumber sealed.

To veil the brightening beams, that streak
 His pallid brow and sunken cheek,
 Albert approached the chink; amaze
 And horror fixed his silent gaze;
 For, lifeless on the dewy turf,

Young Leila lay beneath the cave,
 As lies a mound of silvery surf

Upon the green sea wave.
 Their shadowy veil the tresses throw
 Profusely o'er the arm of snow
 That props her head; the other pressed
 Her lute beneath the folding vest,

Clasp'ing it, as her fondest care
 In death itself had centered there.
 Aroused by Izram's waking sigh,
 Albert withdrew his glistening eye,
 Bent o'er the youth, and strove to guile
 His watchful heed with wonted smile,
 Pressing the hand whose feverish glow
 Betrayed the recent work of woe.
 "How far the stealing rays have crept,
 While heavily the sluggard slept!
 The night was drear—an evil guest
 Was lurking in my gloomy breast,
 Impatience—little known to thee;
 Comrade of crime and misery.
 When Heaven its secret fire applies,
 How thick the latent scum will rise!
 How fiercely doth deceptive sin
 Contest her ancient throne within!
 Now, wearied in the bitter fray,
 My spirit longs to soar away;

Deep festering in my faithless heart,
 Rankles temptation's fiery dart.
 Though dimmed the gold with vilest dross,
 I shun the furnace, dread the cross ;
 Albert, hast thou no word of cheer ?
 Thy lid hath crushed a rising tear.
 That note, perchance, of yestereve,
 Wakened some chord"—" For thee I grieve ;
 The cup with sorrow brimmed, and shed
 In chastening wisdom on thy head ;
 But He will arm thee yet"—in haste
 Izram the rocky cavern paced,
 And viewed the scene— his placid air
 Wore the still calm of mute despair,
 Nor query drew, nor pleadings wrung
 One accent from his freezing tongue.
 Lost in the very trance of woe,
 No sigh could heave, no drop could flow,
 Till roused by Albert's arm, who sought
 To force him from the blighting spot,

He muttered low, "She came to save—
 I doomed her to a cold still grave;
 Dark, dark and hopeless—thou art fled—
 Leila, thy very soul is dead.
 Albert, forbear; thou canst not move—
 Seest thou the lute, my gift of love?
 True, to thy latest gasp,—I know
 Thy wedded life was double woe.—
 Spurned from my home, the night-cloud wept
 Her dews upon thy dying head;
 Across thy cheek the glow-worm crept,
 The hovering bat his pinion spread,
 And fanned away thy parting sigh,
 While slept thy fell destroyer nigh,
 In hateful ease."—A youthful deer
 Spurned the light turf, and gambol'd near;
 Starting he cried, "Thou shalt not stay,
 To glut the ravening bird of prey!"
 Seizing his woodland garb, he tore
 The barrier from their narrow door—

"Albert, forgive! I cannot brook
 The language of thy pleading look :
 Guard thou the cell"—"And let thee stray
 Unaided on thy desperate road?
 While foes beset thy prayerless way,
 Faith slumbers, headlong passions goad,
 And this perchance some crafty gin
 To close thy wild career in sin."
 Reclining on the loosened stone,
 The sufferer heaves a bitter groan :
 "Inhuman! wouldst thou leave her there;
 For bird to peck, and beast to tear?"
 "We may not—'twere a hateful deed
 To spurn a dying sinner's need;
 For life may linger yet, or guile
 May deeply weave a subtle wile.
 Bid thy tumultuous thoughts subside,
 Look to the Lord, our shield and guide;
 Though sharp the flame, His tender care
 Rules the refining process there."

"Thy meekness never chides—this vein
 Is bursting now with frenzied pain :
 All may be well ; but bide thou near,
 Nought but my treacherous self I fear :
 Descend we swiftly"—"Forward press,
 For duty calls, and Heaven will bless."
 The cataract, in its wildest chase,
 Might scarce outstrip their downward pace ;
 And Albert's hand hath lifted slow
 The tress from Leila's cheek of snow.
 In smothered tone he breathed, "Beware,
 No seal of death is graven there ;
 The dews impart a humid chill,
 But conscious life is bounding still :
 Mark how the faint suffusions creep ;—
 No semblance here of trance or sleep."
 Vainly he spoke—the fatal spell
 Had wrought its treacherous bidding well :
 Wreathed in its toils, the youth had stood,
 Though echoing thunders cleft the wood,

Reckless of all. "Now, darest thou say
Life lingers in that beauteous clay?

The eye is dim, the lip is mute,

Or Izram's plaint had Leila woke;

All silent, as the sleeping lute,

Where love and music spoke.

Back! bar me not—can peril's breath

Lurk on the frozen lip of death?

Deep in the cave we'll dig her tomb,

And strew with softest flowers the bed:—

Welcome the sternly righteous doom,

The wrath-shower on my guilty head!

So calm I'll be"—"Thou wilt not read

This cozening gear with Christian heed:

Nought moves thee, save the pleading guest

Coiled in thine own deluded breast."

"I tell thee, if the curdling blood

But crept with nature's faintest flow,

My voice would bid the mantling flood

On that soft cheek in crimson glow.

Foul wrong thy slanderous tongue hath thrown,
Scorning the truth thou ne'er hast known."

"Such truth were crime: a seraph's guise
May veil the fraudful prince of lies,
And couched beneath some specious name
Unhallowed passions darkly flame;
Sin's poisoned chalice crowned with flowers
That bloom and breathe of Eden's bowers:
But death is ambushed—came the song
Pure from the modest lip of truth,
To bid thy shrinking soul prolong
The visioned theme of erring youth,
Renewed in guilt?—Betrayed to roam,
O call thy wandering spirit home,
Ere Heaven some direful scourge display,
To chase thee from the devious way,
Or leave thy wilful foot to tread
The regions of the doubly dead."

Alternate crept o'er Izram's frame
 The chill of anguish, glow of shame :
 Quelled by the mild rebuke, he bent
 O'er his light bow with gaze intent,
 And spoke in tone subdued. " If wile,
 Leila, thy conscious thought defile,
 If vital ether heave suppressed,
 As half I deem, within thy breast,
 And from thy lip's unfaded rose
 To fan the tress, that current flows,
 I call thee, by the net of love
 Thy maiden skill too firmly wove,
 By all the wrongs thy race have shed
 On Aztlan's line, and Izram's head,
 By faith professed, and matron pride,
 Fling the detested mask aside.—
 I call thee, by the awful name
 Of Him who lit the living flame,
 The fiat of whose frown can turn
 This pageant to reality,—

Let not thy hardened spirit spurn

A brother sinner's plea !

Albert, remove the tress again ;

I venture not—now swells the vein ;

The quivering lash, the tints that rise,

Bear token of a foul device.

Ingrate ! for thee the crimson tide

Of human life this hand hath dyed ;

For thee a mother's heart I broke,

For thee the living Lord forsook ;

And comest thou now, with demon wrath,

To haunt the exile's thorny path,

Wormwood to blend with gall, and wrest

The peace-branch from a bleeding breast !”

While low he bent his throbbing head,

A dart, with aim unerring sped,

Whizzed loud and near ; then Leila's shriek

Burst, as the current fanned her cheek.

Starting he rose with brightening eye—

“ The purple shaft ! the storm is nigh—”

Speed, Albert, to the cave—for thee,
 Versed in Iberian treachery”——
 Clasp ing his neck, she strove to stay
 His steps—“ Dissembling tool, away !
 Thou’rt woman, and I would not harm——
 Another shaft ! untwine thine arm,
 Avert thy dauntless brow ; begone,
 Or force shall sever—Albert, on.
 Then thus the serpent fold I tear,
 And fling thee hence, thou painted snare !
 Go, seek the hope, to sinners free,
 Thy lures had doubly wiled from me.”
 Swift to the winding ridge they sprung ;
 Rebounding from its bulwark rung
 Rude bullets, winged with distant aim,
 That fast in deadly greeting came ;
 But turned by jutting crags, they sweep
 Innocuous down the shadowy steep,
 While press the youths their rapid road,
 And fence them in their wild abode.

Forth from a narrow niche of stone,
 Broke on their ear a sullen tone,
 Of stern reproof—in gloomy mood,
 Xloti before his comrade stood.
 “Beseemed it well, misguided youth,
 To dally with a broken snare,
 While duteous zeal, and loyal truth,
 Scattered their bootless vows in air?
 Still to a wanton's shameless face
 Fall hecatombs of Aztlan's race?
 For this, in yonder pois'nous dell,
 Hath Xloti couched, to guard thy cell,
 While thickened on his gasping breath
 The sorest venom-taints of death?
 Well may'st thou veil the brow that shone
 With glory tarnished, withered, gone!
 Yet mark me, Prince; we yet may gain
 A dying wreath from baffled Spain,
 The band with one fierce whirlwind sweep,
 And perish on the mangled heap.”

"Xloti, forbear: no gush of gore
May sully this sad spirit more."

"Thus is thy recreant soul subdued?
Softened to very womanhood!

Will'st thou we blazon Izram's name
With traitor's wile, or coward's shame?

—There burst the blaze of native pride!"

"Of native sin; I could not bide
Thy bitterness of speech, though long

My step that path of shame hath trod,
Faithful in crime, and bold in wrong,

Traitor and coward both to God.
Deeply my inmost thoughts confess

Thy steadfast love, and deeply bless;
But urge no more;—I may not stain

My soul with murderous deed again."

"Then art thou false, as copper snake
That creeps within the flowery brake;

False as delusive vapours, spread
O'er gulfs to tempt the pilgrim's tread.

The flame I nursed in boyhood's days,
 Was but the birch-bark's crackling blaze ;
 There lurks some foul mysterious stain
 In thy fair brow, and azure vein :
 Tezeuco's blood hath never flowed
 To brighten that obscure abode."
 The fire of wildest agony
 Swelled Izram's lip, and shot his eye ;
 The pang his shivering bosom wrung,
 But firm endurance chained his tongue.
 Xloti with folding arms perused
 His varying look, and deeply mused :
 " Thy hand hath never sped one blow
 Of justice on my country's foe ;
 I've heard thee brag of severed chain,
 Of vengeful gash, and shattered brain,
 Yet close beneath this well-girt hill
 Anselmo bides, to greet thee still."
 " Anselmo !"—" Why, the news I tell
 Hath flushed thee with a brighter joy

Than when our ruined island cell
 Rang to thy praise. Perfidious boy!
 Reluctant here my head I shroud,
 Till spreads the night her darksome cloud:
 Failing in felon guise to glide
 Where strode my sires in kingly pride
 Thy shame shall doubly edge my sword
 To burst through yonder bandit horde.
 I barter not thy worthless life
 To screen me from unequal strife,
 But while my fettered race I mourn,
 Far from my soul thy memory spurn."
 "Yet hear me, Xloti"—"Not a word,
 Save those in days of glory heard,
 Say thou art Izram still, invest
 With warrior belt thy regal breast;
 Brandish the rusting dirk on high,
 Raise thy bold fathers' battle-cry;
 Fling back thy waving locks again,
 As chargers toss the streaming mane,

While quivers on thy kindling brow
 The flash of death—it struggles now,
 Waked by my words—aye, let it blaze,
 To light us through the midnight maze,
 In blackening flame to blast the foe :—
 Then, step for step, and blow for blow,
 I'll tend thee ; with expiring gasp
 Hail thee unconquered, royal, brave,
 And greet thee with a hero's clasp,
 In freedom's reeking grave.
 —That gesture of despondence !—Leave
 My sickening sight till gloomy eve :
 Pour on my ear one pleading breath,
 I quit thy den, and rush to death."
 Low in the farthest cavern laid,
 He wrapped him in his mantle's shade ;
 Till, issuing from the silent cell,
 Sternly he glanced, and frowned farewell.

Firm as Urraca's rock, and dire

Donusca's lava fire !

'Twas he who brought the fatal theme
 To feed my soul's ambitious dream ;
 And oh how doubly poignant came
 From Xloti's lip the charge of shame !
 His magic call might almost raise
 Some blighting shape of other days ;
 But fettered now—with deep control,
 A mightier hand subdues my soul :
 He bends me to His sovereign will,
 Breathing the mandate, ' Be thou still,
 The conflict is the Lord's '—I wait
 In faith assured, and hope elate.
 Anselmo lives : the impious vow
 Unsealed ; nor this my guilty brow,
 Amid the wide, the frequent stain,
 Scarred with the hideous brand of Cain."

Fierce is the din, and stern the jar,
 When monarchs lead a nation's war ;
 When combat's swarthy thunder-cloud

In crimson wraps the rayless sun,
 Where low, beneath its curling shroud,
 Lie legions lost for baubles won.
 More fierce the Christian's battle-day,
 While heaven and hell contest the prey,
 And hosts of dread immortals rise
 To struggle for a deathless prize.
 Let earth, in darkened vision, deem
 His conflict vain, his hope a dream,
 Judging her foul alloy may grace
 Jehovah's awful dwelling-place :—
 Polluted lies the precious ore,
 Bedded within her dingy core,
 And force must rend the flinty soil,
 And labour ply the lengthening toil,
 And care select, and flame refine,
 Till pure the costly metal shine,
 Exalted from its base abode,
 To deck the beauteous fane of God.

O'er the sad scene of human woes
 Again the radiant day-star glows;
 Meridian lustres gem his throne,

Flash on the wave, and gild the bough,
 And brightly streak the vaulted stone,

Untenanted, unguarded now.
 They sparkle on the distant plain,
 Where scour the gallant barbs of Spain,
 And bends the plumed cavalier
 O'er the proud mane, in full career.

That motion, fetterless and bold,

The wanton breeze and spacious sky,
 Ev'n through the captive's bosom rolled

The bounding throb of liberty.
 Mantles elate the ruddy stream,
 Expands the eye's unconquered beam;
 Nor darkening doom a spell could fling
 On buoyant youth's elastic spring.

Their foes descried the mantled flight;
 Of Xloti 'neath bewildering night;

And long that gliding form pursued,
 Whose wily paths the gaze elude.
 They deemed some ambushed foe had scanned
 The weakness of their slender band,
 And counselled, with approaching day,
 To draw the net and snare the prey, ere
 Ere, summoned to their chieftain's need,
 Unwelcome succours mar the deed.
 The rack, with ruthless skill, had wrung
 A tale of blood from Nepual's tongue;
 Half won to Gondolph's secret aim,
 He wavered 'twixt the lure and shame;
 But guiltless of the wile that brought
 The tyrant to their caverned grot;
 In mingled wrath and fear he heard
 The haughty captive's threatful word
 Of treason bared to Izram's view,
 And goaded thus, the boaster slow
 Devised a tale, to taint the dead
 With suicidal act, and fled.

He marvelled how the gurgling wave
 Forced entrance to their costly cave ;
 But lips with two-fold treachery stained
 Nor mercy found nor credence gained.

Long had Anselmo yearned, to sate
 The cravings of vindictive hate ;
 Immured he dwelt, while pompous fame
 With martyr's wreath adorned his name.

Full many a subtle web he spun,
 Counting his victim lightly won ;
 But HE, compassionate in wrath,

Whose word is sure, whose counsels stand,
 Spread round the hapless wanderer's path

The shadow of His guardian hand.
 Satanic biddings men fulfil,
 Yet, blindly, work Jehovah's will,
 Though, whet by bribes, the secret knife
 Had long been aimed at Izram's life,
 Nepuel alone, with traitor-word,
 Revealed his country's regal hoard,

And baffled avarice dealt the meed,
 Just guerdon of his impious deed.
 Perplexed and shamed, with wary tread,
 A kindred band Anselmo led ;
 Blithely his ire would Izram doom
 To public rage, and felon's tomb ;
 But, leagued with Albert, who shall dare
 To bid that fearless lip declare

What stain their bigot race defiles ?
 Rousing from his pacific lair
 The lion of the British isles,
 To press the yielding wave, and roar
 Destruction on their guilty shore.

The youths were traced ; but fraud nor power
 Might win that wild rock's guarded tower :
 Yet Leila's feigning, ill withstood,
 Had closed the victim's course in blood,
 Had Xloti failed to circumvent,
 With hand unseen, the dark intent,

Ere foes, in widening ring withdrawn,
 Could muster on the fatal lawn.
 Once more enlivening beams arrayed
 In golden streak the vaulted shade,
 While, wafted on the fragrant air,
 Came specious words in proffer fair,
 And oaths of deep assurance given,
 Pledged in the awful name of Heaven,
 That nought essayed that legal band,
 Save guidance to the peaceful strand,
 To bid them unmolested sweep,
 In British bark, the rolling deep.
 Cleared from the charge of murderous deed,
 Rebellion claimed a lighter meed;
 And lenient justice willed no more
 Than exile from th' offended shore—
 So Izram plighted faith, to stay
 Each hostile band that barred their way.
 Incredulous, with pensive smile,
 The captives glanced their mutual thought;

Surveyed their store's diminished pile—

Till whispering hope her phantoms brought:

Then swift, in shadowy form, succeed

The chalky cliff and dappled mead,

While murmur through a distant sky

Carols of peace and liberty.

“Be life or death the tissue spun,”

Albert exclaimed, “a rest is won:

Demons and men conspire in vain;

We can but die, and death is gain.

Or, rescued from this tiger's grasp,

To plough the ocean's sparkling foam,

Oh, many a joyous hand shall clasp

Thy welcome, in my own fond home!

And Christian love shall softly steep

In soothing balm thy patriot wound;

And sacred sympathy will weep,

While faith's strong pleadings rise around.

Come, and be thou in Ulric's stead,

To prop my father's drooping head;

And, twin of Albert's soul, to share
 Each pious toil, each sylvan care."
 A smile, a tear, on Izram's cheek,
 His bosom's grateful swell bespeak.
 "Sweet is thy dream—if such His will,
 May Heaven the gentle thought fulfil!
 Drained is our limpid store, and spent
 The cocoa's oily nutriment;
 Yield we to God, and humbly pray
 His blessing on our foe-girt way."

Swiftly across the trembling sod,
 From morn to eve the coursers trod:
 For yet the Spaniards' conscious fear
 Pourtrayed avengers lurking near.
 Veiled in persuasive courtesy,
 Keenly they bent the falcon eye;
 The band in wary guard arrayed
 Around their prey, and grasped the blade.

As fades the second day, they sweep,
 With weary hoof, a pine-crowned steep,
 And pause to breathe: the western glow
 Plays o'er a beauteous scene below:
 Varied, with undulating swell,
 Aspires the hill, and sinks the dell;
 Spreads the broad plain, and o'er the glades
 Cluster and bow gigantic shades:
 Here, rolling tides the surface break;
 There slumbers the majestic lake:
 And herds of snow-white deer recline
 Where meads in flowery splendour shine.
 Skirting the lovely spot, they wend
 Far to the right, and still ascend;
 But fondly Izram's glistening eye
 Lingers on that soft scenery.
 "How richly teems this sighing gale
 With sweets from Anahuac's vale!
 Land of my fathers! who shalt wrest
 Thine impress from my yearning breast!—

Thine Izram holds thee dearer far,
 Than when in wrathful crime he stood,
 Pledging th' unhallowed vow of war,
 To bathe thy verdant robe in blood.
 Hope, faith, and love, would fain inspire
 My parting word with prophet-fire—
 Yes, thou shalt surely rise again,
 And shake thee from the sullen chain;
 Shining in uncreated rays,
 Beneath the gospel's mellowing blaze;
 Pealing, in form and spirit free,
 Exulting hymns of liberty!"
 His eye with sacred rapture shone,
 And boldly swelled the solemn tone:
 No longer on that beauteous brow
 Reigned fiery hate, or gloomy care;
 Seraphic peace was beaming now,
 The signet of the Lord was there.
 Wondering his foes beheld, and heard,
 The placid gaze, the temperate word,

And inly thought, "Where lurks the fire
 Of parching scorn, and flaming ire?
 What hand hath burst the chord that spoke
 In thunder, by that theme awoke?"
 Jeering they asked, in bitter vein,
 "Hast thou no augury for Spain?
 Iberia blends, in ancient tale,
 Her name with Anahuac's vale"—
 A passing flash from Izram's eye
 Gave comment on his calm reply,
 "Though freedom rive, with generous hand,
 The fetter from your parent land,
 Your practised grasp will seize the chain,
 And close the severed links again.
 The burrowing mole, espoused to night,
 Brooks not the smile of ruddy light;
 Basking beneath a genial ray,
 The river tribes will shrink away;
 Each struggling form intent to hide
 In the deep earth, or caverned tide.

Custom your hapless race hath pent
 In tyranny's dark element :
 The yoke on other nations thrown,
 Trammels, with power reflex, your own :
 O'erspread with superstition's pall,
 The brazen bonds your land enthal :
 Beneath a blinding curse ye roam,
 Tyrants abroad, and slaves at home.
 Seek ye for freedom ? con the word
 Of freedom's law, and freedom's Lord :
 Loosen the captive's irons ; rend
 The bands of cruelty and strife ;
 Idols abjure, and meekly bend
 To Christ alone for light and life."

Another noon, and, still remote,
 Murmured the ocean's lofty note :
 Then Albert, in his stirrup raised,
 Eastward with kindling ardour gazed.

"Hear'st thou the mighty hymn, that pours
Its descant round Britannia's shores?

Hark! how the rolling cadence swells—

O! many a tale that billow tells,

Calling my inmost soul to bear

Symphonious part, in praise and prayer."

A short descent, and ocean gave

Full on their view his heaving wave;

And while the rocky shore they near,

Izram remarked, "No port is here:

No swelling sail salutes the view,

No banner streaks th' unbroken blue;

But moulders many a river wreck,

On the dark coast, in frequent speck.

Our earthly pilgrimage is o'er—

Albert, thine eager thought no more

To thy parental roof may roam;

We haste to an eternal home."

"Then welcome be the summons given:

It hath oped the gate of heaven."

Rudely upon their rugged path
 Now pressed the guides, in rising wrath,
 Half quelled by mockery—"See the tide
 Heaving its crest in loyal pride:
 A Briton rules the wave, and brings
 The last bold son of Aztlan's kings
 To press the surge—this duteous air
 Waits on your will in breezes fair;
 And currents set, with sturdy force,
 Right to the east their favouring course."
 Culled from the wrecks, a shallow boat
 Their ruthless hands prepare to float;
 Still jibing—"Did thy conscious thought,
 Thou kingly prophet! augur nought,
 While on our secret record stood
 Anselmo's wrong, and Gondolph's blood?
 And thou, whose impious rage could scorn
 Salvation's God in triumph borne,
 Hop'dst thou we had not might, to bow
 Thy stubborn neck and brazen brow?

Our thousands with applauding breath
 Had drowned your yells of lingering death,
 But policy prevailed—How tame
 Stands the bright heir of Aztlan's fame!
 Mute as his mighty sires, who fled,
 Dumb with amaze, and wild with dread
 When thundered forth our warrior hos-
 tern greeting, on their vassal coast.
 Can fear the braggart's tongue enchain?
 Hast thou no parting curse for Spain?"
 "No; may a Saviour's pleading win
 Remission of this crowning sin!
 On your polluted souls be shewn
 Such mercy as redeems our own:
 Circle a few short years,—we meet,
 Confronted, at the judgment-seat;
 And, grace despised, Almighty ire
 Must overwhelm you in eternal fire.
 Albert, proceed: this bounding wave,
 Like a triumphal car, shall bear

Our souls to bliss, and yield a grave,

Till dust revive that bliss to share."

"Brother, I come, o'erjoyed to twine,

In life or death, my fate with thine.

For ye, whose erring scorn would shame

Your patient prey with coward's name,

And on the very verge of heaven

His spirit taint with passion's leaven,—

Nor man nor demon quelled the soul

That cowed ye once with proud control:

The Lord alone that conquest won,

A rebel crushed, and claimed a son.

Mark, doth his blooming cheek appear

By vengeance scorched, or blanched by fear?

Mysterious Heaven the deed allows,

While for the youth's immortal brows,

Unwittingly, your hands prepare

A brighter crown than monarchs wear."

Poising the shallop's rocking side,

With foot advanced, his comrade stood,

Calm as the brooding dove, and eyed

The tumult of that swelling flood :

A smile of joyous meaning broke

O'er his glad lip as Albert spoke ;

Then lightly, through the slender spray.

They gained the bark, and launched away.

Fleetly the rolling waters bore

Their burden from the fatal shore.

There rose no billow's crested head,

The deep a sheeny surface spread,

Beneath a storm-portending sky,

Heaving unbroken, huge, and high ;

Though oft the roughening breeze impressed

Rude circlets on its glossy breast ;

And wide and low the purple cloud,

With thunder-fraught, in menace bowed,

While on its dark verge melt away

Dim relics of the evening ray.

In air and ocean closely pent,
 Struggled the storm : the waters vent,
 Unbroken yet, a moaning sound,
 While falling shadows thicken round.

Curtained beneath that timeless night,
 The towering rocks no more appear ;
 They fade from Izram's yearning sight,
 While trembles on his lash a tear ;
 And sad his pensive accents swell—
 “ My own devoted land, farewell !
 Though wrapped in black oblivious skies,
 Thy dawn shall break, thy splendour rise ;
 But darksome deeds may long prevail,
 Ere rent thy spirit's ébon veil.
 Not mine to hail thee, blessed and free,
 Yet teems my latest sigh with thee ;
 And mine, perchance, from yonder skies,
 To watch thy ripening destinies.

List, Albert, to the thunder's voice—
 Now could my inmost soul rejoice,
 In prospect of the tranquil shore,
 Where sin and sorrow war no more,
 But thou, my victim"——"Canst thou deem
 A spirit of celestial birth
 So wedded to a grovelling dream,
 So tangled in the mire of earth,
 To change, were yet the choice mine own,
 This billow for a kingly throne?
 No:—for my raptured eye hath caught
 Visions of glory, passing thought:
 Terrestrial pageants shrink and die
 In beams of immortality.
 I mount the sapphire heights; I see
 Jesus, the Lamb who died for me:
 I press amid th' adoring throng,
 And wave the palm, and learn the song.
 Even now, angelic squadrons sweep,
 With viewless step, this awe-struck deep,

Circle our joyous course, and mark
 The progress of our gliding bark.
 How richly o'er the waters steal
 The echoes of that distant peal !
 How swift the trembling flash ! a light
 Of quenchless noon is ours to-night.
 Commotion rudely rocks the tide,
 See how these crazy planks divide ;
 The surges press in foaming chase,
 And tidings of deliverance tell ;
 Welcome the note—this last embrace,
 Dear Izram, speaks a long farewell."

" Recal the word ; we sever not,
 Nor such the spirit's chilling lot :
 Death triumphs o'er the withering clay,—
 Immortal souls deride his sway,
 And perfect, in ethereal birth,
 Th' embryo bud that swelled on earth.

Oh, thine hath been an angel's care,
 And thine the love that seraphs bear;
 And hast thou toiled so sore below,
 Through peril, darkness, blood, and woe,
 To win me from th' infernal strife,
 And draw me to the fount of life,
 And here, to glory's threshold, led
 My fainting heart and faltering tread,
 To lose me now—when, fetter-free,

Th' exulting spirit soars on high,
 And sin's detested progeny

Low in unfathomed waters lie?
 Can love, unearthly, pure, as thine,
 Dissolve beneath material brine,
 A sparkle of celestial fire
 As elemental dross expire?
 No, Albert: no disunion this;
 Co-heritors of endless bliss,
 Down, down to ocean's deepmost cell,
 Be plunged that gloomy word, farewell!

And be the rivets doubly driven
That clasp our souls in bonds of heaven !”

Impetuous gales, careering, urge
To fiercer speed the writhing surge;
Rushed the tumultuous tides, to rock
Their giddy prey with wilder shock :
Buoyed on the mounting foam they go,
And totter in the gulf below :
Then burst the straining bark, and gave
Its burden to the greedy wave.
Instinctive nature struggled still,
While youthful courage, nerve, and skill,
Held the terrific king at bay,
And triumphed o’er the angry spray.
But short the toil—unsevered yet,
Their souls the awful summons met—
“ He calls ! forbear this idle strife—
Why linger at the gate of life ?
The crown is won, the conflict o’er ;

Together let us sink, and soar.

Receive us, Lord!"——The arm they closed,

And, bowing, on the wave reposed :

Soft, from that pall of sable cloud,

A farewell flash in brightness came,

And broad upon their liquid shroud

Quivered a while the lingering flame ;

And sadly o'er the moaning tide

Low thunders pealed the funeral dirge—

In death embracing, side by side,

They sank beneath the eddying surge.

NOTES.

Page 21, l. 5.—“*Know'st thou Chiapa's soil,*” &c.

“THE inhabitants of the province of Chiapa are distinguished above all others. They owe their superiority to the advantage of having had for their teacher Las Casas, who originally prevented them from being oppressed. They surpass their countrymen in size, genius, and strength: their language has a peculiar softness and elegance: they are painters, musicians, and dexterous in all arts. Their principal town is called Chiapa dos Indos. It is only inhabited by natives of the country, who form a community consisting of about 4,000 families, amongst which are found many of the Indian nobility. They form naval armies with their boats: they engage, attack, and defend themselves with surprising agility: they excel no less in the chase of bulls, cudgelling, dancing, and all bodily exercises. They build towns and castles of wood, which they cover with oil-cloth, and besiege in form.—From these particulars we see what the Mexicans were capable of, had they passed under the dominion of a conqueror possessing moderation and good sense enough to relax the chains of their servitude, instead of riveting them.”—*Raynal*.

Page 22, l. 11.—“*Sons of those illustrious dead,*” &c.

The Caziques were sovereign princes, each in his own territory: they displayed the state, and exercised the privileges of independent monarchs, but followed the imperial standard in battle, and are said to have brought each from 50,000 to 100,000 warriors into the field. Their title was hereditary, and to a select number of them was committed the task of electing the Emperor. The Caziques

of Tezeuco and Tacuba were always included among these: they appear to have been the most powerful and influential of the native princes, and their territories were hardly inferior in extent to those of the Mexican monarch.

Page 38, l. 9.—“*New treasures to the gaze unfold.*”

The author has availed herself of poetic licence (however disputable her pretensions to a poet's name) in following the more romantic and less probable accounts given by Spanish writers of the costly treasures and exquisite workmanship displayed in Mexico's imperial palaces. Dr. Robertson, while protesting against these exaggerated descriptions, has doubtless erred in the opposite extreme; depreciating the genius, wealth, civilization, arts, and policy of the Mexicans, as palpably as other chroniclers have over-rated them. The fanatical barbarism of an ignorant Franciscan, John of Zummaraga, who committed to the flames all he could collect of the national hieroglyphic records, under the absurd pretence of their being monuments of idolatry, has deprived Europeans of valuable documents tending to illustrate such attainments in science as few are disposed to admit this extraordinary people had made, though very competent judges have asserted it. Astronomy, music, medicine, and political economy, were certainly understood among them: and if the uncontradicted testimony of eye-witnesses may be credited, they were accomplished architects, horticulturists, sculptors, goldsmiths, jewellers, and excelled in all the imitative arts.

Page 49, l. 1.—“*Aztlan's native train.*”

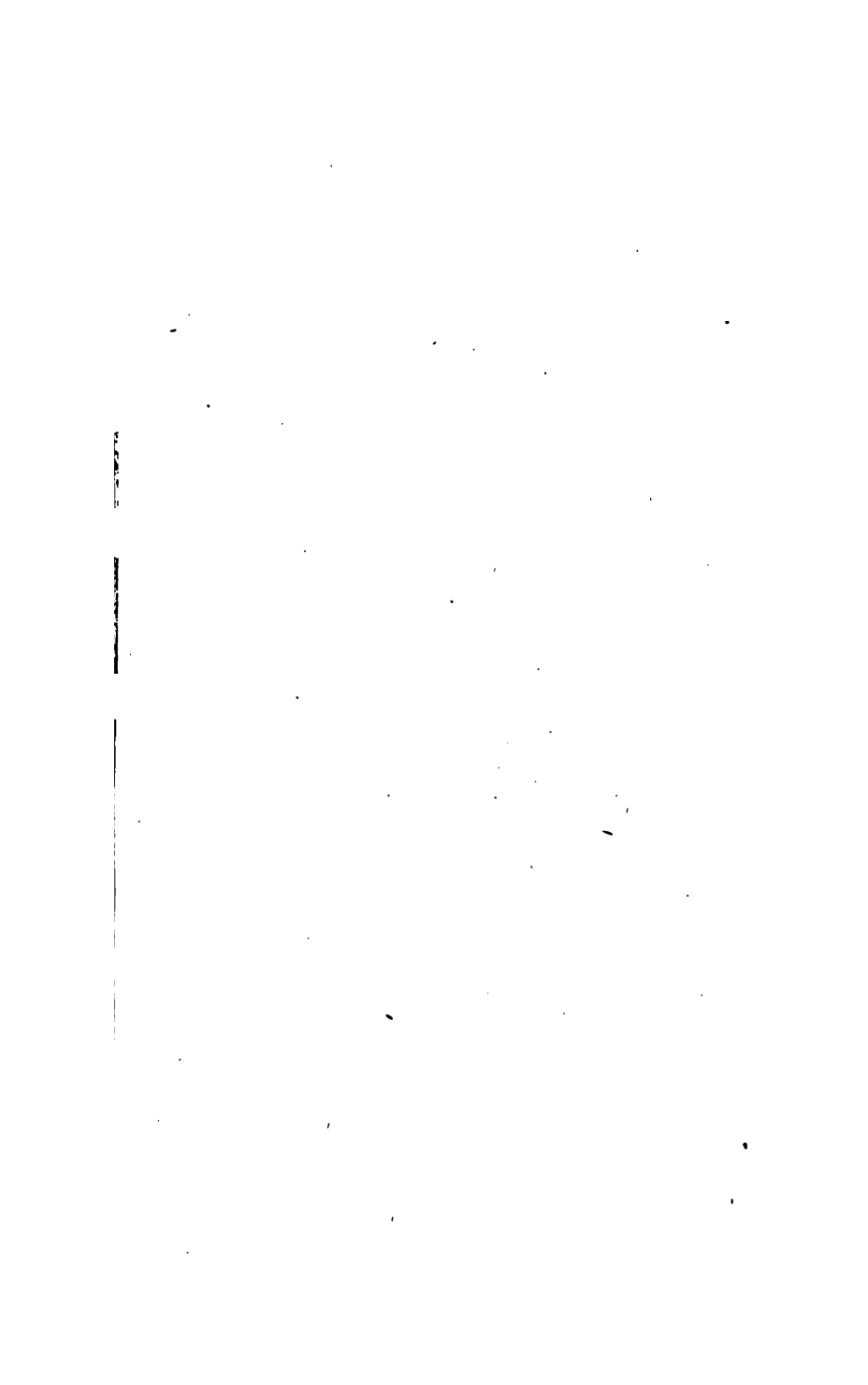
Aztlan was the country from whence migrated the tribe of Aztecas, who founded the Mexican empire.

Page 68, l. last.—“*That mysterious treasury.*”

It is well known that the heroic Emperor Guatimozin was most barbarously, but ineffectually, tortured by the unprincipled Cortez, who caused him to be stretched on burning coals, to extort the discovery of treasures which

he was suspected of having concealed from the merciless depredators. His prime minister expired beside him, after indicating a disposition to disclose the secret, which was checked by the memorable reproof of Guatimozin, who exclaimed, "Am I now on a bed of roses?" This royal sufferer, whose only crime was a gallant defence of his throne and people, was hanged three years afterwards, on an improbable charge of conspiring against the usurpers of his crown, whose captive he yet remained! Do not our days exhibit an awful visitation of the sins of the fathers upon their impenitent children, in the accumulated miseries under which Spain is yet groaning? The atrocities of Cortez, his companions, and their successors, would have disgraced a horde of savages who never had heard of a righteous God or a judgment to come: but when it is considered how the name of Christ was blasphemed through them, while His pure word was prostituted to their iniquitous purposes, and His symbolical cross made the standard under which to perpetrate their enormities, against an unoffending, confiding people, we cannot but shudder in contemplating the now irrevocable doom of the aggressors, and long to address to their descendants the warning voice, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

It is futile and contemptible to argue that the idolatrous Mexicans were more superstitious, inhuman, and blood-thirsty, than their invaders. "The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty." THEY were pagans; the Spaniards, on the contrary, assumed the Christian name: and the only message that the Christian is commissioned to bear among heathen nations is, GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST: ON EARTH PEACE; GOOD-WILL TOWARDS MEN. BELIEVE IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND YE SHALL BE SAVED.



MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THE SWAN.

BEYOND the ruby portal of the west
Day's golden orb his pillowing cloud hath pressed,
And sped the breeze, to wake in measured sigh,
Through earth's wide realm, a whispering lullaby:
That drowsy pinion sweeps the mountain's brow,
Dimples the stream, and waves the drooping bough.
Prince of the lake! I seek this blue domain,
And press the margin of thy liquid reign,
To mark thy stately form, at vesper hour,
Glide to the covert of its willow bower.

Now heaves the plume, and floats the monarch by,
 As fleecy vapours skim the moonlight sky ;
 And sterner reason half forgets to blame
 The dream of folly, decked by classic fame,
 Though pagan fancy in thy beauteous guise
 Enshroud the fabled ruler of the skies,
 And feign a tale of visionary love,
 A shadowy Leda for a phantom Jove ;
 O'er the proud form a wild illusion throw,
 Its fabric ether, and its robe the snow,
 Caught from the region of her glittering birth,
 Ere blent and tainted with the gales of earth.
 Majestically calm, in conscious might,
 He spreads his bosom to the trembling light ;
 Mantling his neck innoxious thunders dwell,
 Or nestling slumber 'neath the downy swell :
 Rests the bold curve upon its bending arch,
 And gurgling waters close around his viewless march.

There's music in thy motion : such as creeps
 O'er the charmed spirit when the billow sleeps,

And, idly sporting with the zephyr's sigh,
 Droops the white sail beneath a starry sky.
 The top-mast, pointing to that radiant height,
 With slow, mute movement, counts the gems of night;
 Till, grosser sense to deep oblivion wrought,
 On loftier pinion soars unfettered thought,
 Glides where the spheres their mystic orbits wreath,
 And learns the voiceless harmony they breathe.

Thou lovely produce of a wond'rous hand,
 Thou denizen of ether, ocean, land,
 Whose wing, unfurling on the wistful eye,
 Tells of a gentler home, a softer sky,
 While, lingering long below, thy downy form
 Shines through the gloom, and beautifies the storm,
 I liken thee to that ethereal guest,
 The spotless tenant of a holy breast;
 Earnest of glory in compassion given
 To earth's dark sphere, a delegate of heaven:
 Like thee with tranquil majesty to sweep
 Life's wrinkling wave, and gleam upon the deep,

The cold recess with patient step explore,
Yet heave the snowy plume, and pant to soar,
Till, taught thy parting melody to raise,
Soft on the dying lip dissolves the note of praise.

THE MARINER'S MIDNIGHT HYMN.

O THOU, who didst prepare
The ocean's caverned cell,
And led the gathering water there
To meet and dwell;
Tossed in our reeling bark,
On this tumultuous sea,
Thy wond'rous ways, O Lord, we mark,
And sing to thee.

How terrible art thou
In all thy wonders shewn;
Though veiled is that eternal brow,
Thy steps unknown:
Invisible to sight,
But, oh, to faith how near!
Beneath the gloomiest cloud of night
Thou beamest here.

Borne on the darkening wave,
 In measured sweep we go,
 Nor dread the unfathomable grave
 That yawns below ;
 For He is nigh, who trod
 Amid that foaming spray,
 Whose billows owned th' incarnate God,
 And died away.

Let slumber's balmy seal
 Imprint our tranquil eyes,
 Though deep beneath the waters steal,
 And circling rise ;
 Though swells the confluent tide,
 And beetles far above,
 We know in whom our souls confide,
 With fearless love.

Snatched from a darker deep,
 And waves of wilder foam,

Thou, Lord, those trusting souls wilt keep,

And waft them home :

Home, where no tempests sound, .

Nor angry waters roar,

Nor troublous billows heave around

The peaceful shore.

FAREWELL TO ERIN.

LAND of my choice ! the adverse breeze,
That, vainly kind, would yet repel
My course along these yielding seas,
Wafts thee a sad, a fond farewell :
And fast the bitter tear will rise,
And silently the heart will bleed,
While slowly from my wistful eyes
Thy soft and laughing shores recede.

Land of the hospitable wile !
Condemned in other climes to rove,
Where shall I meet the glowing smile,
The eye of light, the heart of love ?
Ev'n now, while slowly drifting by,
Ev'n now, methinks, the frequent bay
With wonted welcome courts mine eye,
And lures me back, and bids me stay.

Land of a destiny sublime !

A darkening cloud impends around,
 And echo deep the vows of crime,
 And crimson foot-prints taint the ground ;
 Infuriate hosts, in mad career,
 Approach thee like a rolling flood,
 And in thy conscious skies appear
 The signs of blasphemy and blood.

Land of the brave ! oh who shall raise

Amid thy wilds the warning word ?
 Who, in the zeal of other days,
 Exalt the banner of the Lord ?
 Behold ! they come : their beauteous feet
 Shine on the mount and press the plain,
 While pours their lip, in pleading sweet,
 The oil-drop on thy stormy main.

Land of the blest ! the battle-cry

May echo through thy thousand hills,

The gathered tempest burst on high,
 And men of blood work half their wills ;
 But thou shalt view a blaze of day
 Enthroned beyond that transient night,
 To chase the scattered gloom away,
 And fold thee in a vest of light.

Land of the Gospel ! fear thou not :
 Already break the dawning gleams ;
 Thine every waste and barren spot
 Shall blossom in prolific beams.
 Broad as the bulwark ocean pours,
 Whose billows toss their snowy curls,
 With fleecy barrier gird thy shores,
 And wreathe an emerald gem with pearls.

Land of my fond regrets ! to share
 Thy conflicts may not now be mine ;
 But thou shalt rise upon my prayer
 Before the throne of grace divine :

With all the throbbing tides that flow

Within my veins, thy fate shall blend ;

The harsh command that bids me go

Lengthens the tie, but cannot rend.

Isle of the west ! thou stretchest now

In distance on the level sea ;

The sun hath diadem'd thy brow,

Resplendent in obscurity :

And now upon that fading line

Darkly the evening waters swell ;—

Dark as this heaving heart of mine,

That lingers o'er the long farewell.

THE ROSE.

GIVE me that fading flower,

I saw thee cast it by,

Rent from its parent bower

And left to die.

These drooping petals wear

The pallid hue of grief;

A story of despair

Imprints the leaf.

I do not covet now

The tints of summer-tide,

To bind upon my brow,

In playful pride :

This pale autumnal rose

I place upon my breast,

There, in a late repose,

To die—and rest.

Ungential blasts have sped
 Their fury on thy form,
While shrunk thy withering head
 Beneath the storm.
How pleasant to behold
 Thy span of trouble cease,
While droops the silken fold
 In slumbering peace !

And be the fate my own !
 Snatched from a peaceful shade,
Upon a rude world thrown
 To pine and fade,
The hand of love divine
 Shall gather me in death,
And watch while I resign
 My languid breath.

TO LIEUT. COL. SIR JAMES WILSON, K. C. B.

WITH A SKETCH OF THE PENINSULAR CAMPAIGNS.

By victory freed from martial toil,
The patriot Roman turned the soil ;
Woo'd gentle peace in sylvan bowers,
And wreathed the classic page with flowers,
While sought the envious world in vain
To wind him in her snares again.
Guided by wisdom's beam divine,
WILSON, the Roman's choice is thine ;
And never from the lists of fame
A more undaunted warrior came,
To cultivate the blooming field
His generous blood had flowed to shield.

A feeble muse would fain beguile
Thy studious hour, and win a smile ;

Pure though thy taste and judgment be,
She dreads no critic scowl from thee ;
Such gentle knight will scorn to raise
The battle-axe o'er rhymers' bays.
Dim and obscure these outlines shew,
Yet thou canst bid the canvass glow,
While memory tints the picture high
To bright and stern reality ;
Tells how, on Talavera's plain,
Flashed in the cause of heartless Spain
The blade, that in thy stripling hand
Had gleamed on Egypt's gory strand :
Yes, memory's touch the hue shall yield
Of Albuhera's fiery field,
And bid thine eager step advance,
Like levin-bolt, on shrinking France,
Regardless of the welling tide
Thy lacerated veins supplied.
Round Badajos' beleagured towers
Again shall wake the watchful hours ;

Again that dazzling sword shall wave,
To point th' aggressors' destined grave :
The ravelin and the trench proclaim
Memorials of thy warrior fame ;
In flowing crimson deep embrued,
Mangled and faint, but unsubdued.
Begirt by learning's ruffian foes,
Fair Salamanca's spires arose ;
How swiftly thy victorious hand
Led on the bold brigaded band,
Crushing, on that insulted soil,
The sons of anarchy and spoil !
Next let thy kindling eye survey
Vittoria's ne'er-forgotten day ;
(For thou, insatiate, still wouldst seize
Each sprig that decked the laurel trees)
And as thy rapid thoughts retrace
The tumult of that thundering chase,
Bid smiling recollection tell
Of a brave youth, who prized thee well,

Who triumphed with thy martial train
 O'er Lusian fields, and hills of Spain,
 And saw thy conquering banner dance,
 Reflected on the streams of France ;
 He told the bard,—while swelled her tear
 In sister's love, and woman's fear,—
 With hunter's glee, and hero's pride,
 " I coursed a king by WILSON's side."
 Behold the Pyrenean height,
 And rouse thee to a fiercer fight :
 On press thy band to victory,
 By Wellesley called, and led by thee :
 Thy scars, in silent eloquence,
 Tell of the foeman's bold defence,
 When, from the deep and frequent wound,
 Thy vital current gushed around :
 Those pleading scars, that tortured frame,
 Britannia's grateful greeting claim,
 And thankless were the sullen eye
 Undewed by gentle sympathy.

Last, on the plains of fair Toulouse,
 The olive's and the lily's hues
 Blend with the radiant laurel crown,
 That graced thy dearly-bought renown.

On warlike deeds, and thoughts sublime,
 Unmeet to dwell, my lisping rhyme
 No ray to Phœbus' orb bequeaths,
 Nor adds a bloom to WILSON'S wreaths;
 Yet may the phrase, devoid of art,
 Bear witness to thy gen'rous heart,
 And boast, 'mid kindred forms of earth,
 To claim thy friendship, own thy worth,
 To prize that independent soul,
 Which spurns a tyrant world's control,
 The mind that bends an eagle gaze
 To court the day-star's ripened blaze,
 The spirit manly, firm, and free;
 And, prizing these, to honour thee.
 Not thine th' unhallowed thirst of fame,
 The fell destroyer's ruthless name;

But thou couldst rend the softest tie
 That wrapped thine heart, and cheered thine eye,
 And arm thee with the deadly glaive,
 And launch upon the bounding wave,
 Content thy vital stream to pour,
 So freedom reigned on Britain's shore.

Though sweetly smiles thy tranquil home,
 Deem not the day of rest is come;
 A higher praise must yet be sought,
 A sterner combat boldly fought,
 A crown of richer glory won:—
 Salvation's Captain calls thee on:
 Take thou the spirit's sword, and quell
 The wiles of earth, the powers of hell;
 The cross thy banner, faith thy shield,
 Thine inmost heart the battle-field,
 Celestial hosts thy bright allies,
 Thy conquest death, and heaven the prize.

TO

J. W. B.

BAPTIZED DECEMBER 1825.

THOU know'st not, my boy, while we lowly are kneeling
Before the sole Refuge where sinners can flee,
For thee is the sigh of solicitude stealing,
The voice of devotion is rising for thee.
Sweet bud, in thy beauty and innocence swelling !
Believing, yet trembling, we come to receive
A promise, a covert of safety, repelling
The blaze of the noon and the blast of the eve.

The bosom where now thou reclinest may yield thee
A shelter, a rest, through thine infancy's span ;
But all unavailing and helpless to shield thee
From ills that must darken the pathway of man.

The snare is before thee, the pang and the sorrow,
 —The breath of the syren, the voice of the rod,
 The crime of to-day, the despair of to-morrow,
 And all that can sever the soul from its God.

Thou smilest, my babe, on the stream that is stealing
 Like dew o'er the rose of thy innocent face :—
 Oh, thus may the Saviour, his mercy revealing,
 Thy spirit refresh with the waters of grace !
 And thus, unresisting and meek as we view thee,
 Receive thou the unction that comes from above,
 And welcome thy Lord, if he deign to renew thee
 An heir of his kingdom, a child of his love.

Now, triumph and honour, thanksgiving and blessing,
 To Him who was slain that the sinner might live !
 The gift of his grace, which we joy in possessing,
 He died to receive, and receives but to give.

This armour of proof we are girding around thee ;

—For we have been wounded and foiled in the fray—

And oh, may the helm of salvation have crowned thee,

A glory and guard through life's perilous day !

TO

MY BROTHER.

WHAT though no orange grove its fragrance breathe,
Nor teeming olive ripen o'er thy head,
Nor bowering myrtle round our dwelling wreath,
Nor tangling vines the purple cluster spread,—
Dearer this parent soil, that courts thy tread,
Than Lusitania's balmy sweets and oily hoard,
Where sixteen burning summer suns have shed
Their glare, reflected on thy warrior sword,
Or on thy far abode their dazzling splendour poured.

Beamed not a brighter azure through the sky,
While on her course the gallant vessel bore,
And rose not as ethereal harmony
The rich rough tumult of the billows' roar,

When, breasting that rude surge, thy native shore

Heaved its bold barrier to the sportive spray,

And hope on airy pinion sped before,

Skimming the dales, in flowery vesture gay,

Over the distant hills, and fast and far away.

Thine Island home! the soul of freedom now

Bids the full heart-pulse eloquently speak;

The breeze that whilom fanned thine infant brow,

Her joyous welcome breathes upon thy cheek,

Where war and weariness no longer wreak

Their blighting wrath beneath a fervid sky;

Nor burns the Briton's scorn, condemned to seek

Truth's trampled pearl within a moral sty,

Or patriot honour couched in falsehood's blinking eye.

Thine Island home! aye, there are hearts to love

In grateful bosoms, that remember yet

How foe-girt Britain's martial call could move

Thy boyish hand the glittering steel to whet:

How thy unripened spring of manhood met

War's sternest blast of devastating breath ;

As sapling oak on the rock's parapet,

Whose hardy strength the tempest nourisheth,

Matures its blooming pride amid the storms of death.

True, thou hast flourished in an alien soil,

A goodly seed in thankless desert sown,

Where ingrates, reckless of thy generous toil,

Uproot the shelter when the storm's o'erblown.

Our Island boasts an altar, rears a throne,

Meet for thy homage, worthy of thy care :

The black lethean draught her lips disown—

Not her's with parsimonious gripe to tear

The guerdon from thy brow, that victory planted there.

Days we have seen—and they were days of joy,

Bright as the foam that specks a summer sea,

And profitless—when 'twas my fond employ

To tune a busy baby lyre to thee.

Oh! many a sigh hath marred the minstrelsy,
 While their slow course the weary seasons led—
 A bitter cup in wisdom blent for me,
 By Him, who, mindful of compassion, spread
 The panoply unseen around thy favoured head.

A sunny gleam absorbs the trickling rain,
 While my glad lips the Patriarch's joy renew;
 "I thought not to behold thy face again,—
 Lo, God hath giv'n thine offspring to my view!"
 To Him, the Just, the Faithful, and the True,
 Sole Saviour, be the praise:—yet while I deem
 A long deep debt of grateful love is due
 To thee, my Brother, doth it not beseem
 To let this closing chord reverberate the theme?

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